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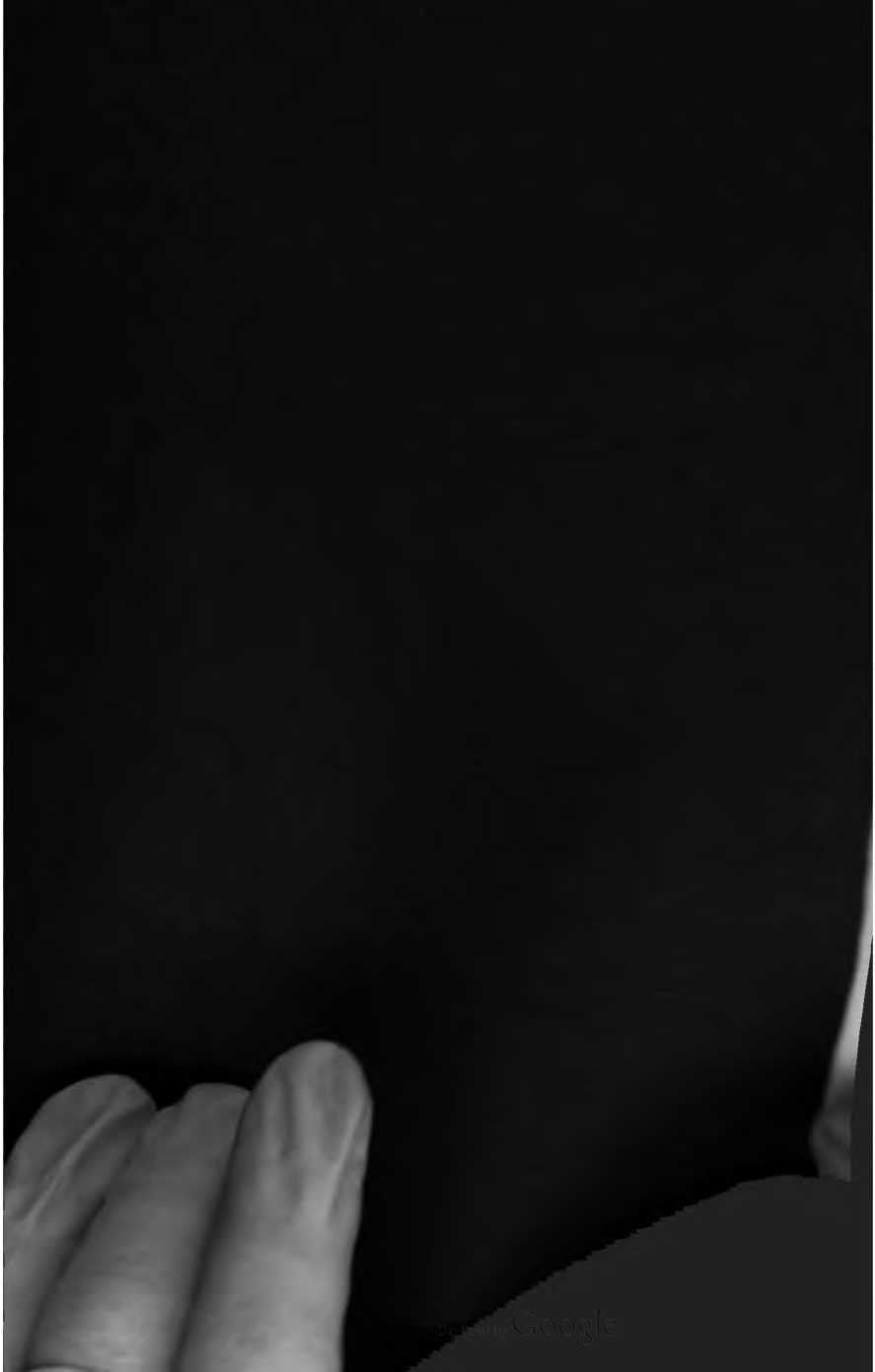
The life of mother Frances Mary Teresa Ball

Henry James Coleridge, Frances Ball

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Quarterly Series.

THIRTY-THIRD VOLUME.

THE LIFE OF MOTHER FRANCES MARY TERESA BALL.

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Frances Mary Teresa Ball

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FROM A CAST TAKEN AFTER DEATH



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THE LIFE OF MOTHER FRANCES MARY TERESA BALL,

FOUNDRESS IN IRELAND OF THE INSTITUTE OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY.

BY

HENRY JAMES COLERIDGE,
OF THE SOCIETY OF JESUS.



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INTRODUCTORY LETTER

FROM HIS GRACE

THE ARCHBISHOP OF DUBLIN,

TO THE

Rev. Mother Mary Xaveria Fallon, Superior-General of the Irish Branch of the Institute of the Blessed Virgin.

4 Rutland-square, East, Dublin.
August 1880.

MY DEAR REV. MOTHER,

I have read with great interest and edification the life of your holy foundress, Mother Mary Teresa Ball. The history of her life is written—as all such histories should be written—in the language of unaffected simplicity; but this very simplicity invests the narrative with a majesty which no glitter of laboured composition could ever realise.

The King of Saints would have the record of His Life and Miracles preserved for all times in

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words of such simple earnestness, that the simplicity of the history almost forces the conviction of its truth on the sceptic and the infidel. Would it not greatly tend to spoil the picture of the servant, to clothe him in garments rejected by his Master? The writer of this life, therefore, has done well in making the dignity of the subject reflect in these pages the pure, calm light by which alone the wonderful works of God in His devoted servants can be correctly studied.

The life of Mother Mary Teresa Ball is a new illustration of the means which God's unerring Providence employs to provide in all ages for the ever-changing circumstances of His Church, and for the ever-varying wants which these circumstances create.

When Frances Ball was born, as far as wicked laws could avail, she brought with her into the world the badge of slavery, and, if society tolerated the class she came of, it was by a sort of condescending patronage almost more galling than the bonds of slavery itself. But the great deliverer whom God sent to lead His people from exile was soon to level the stronghold of usurped ascendency, and to pro-

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claim to the nations, that before the laws of the land and the laws of society, as well as before the laws of God, the Catholics of Ireland must tolerate no inferiority, and that henceforth they must take their proper places in their various social orders, not by patronage or toleration, but by their own unchallenged right. This will be a trying crisis for the Catholic ladies of Ireland.

Unfair contrast and sharp criticisms were sure to await their appearance amongst their hitherto more highly favoured countrywomen, who for ages monopolised the seats of female learning and culture.

The 'Great Archbishop,' whose name is a synonym for wisdom and gentle firmness, saw the approaching change in the social condition of his people, and he resolved to prepare for it. He determined on inaugurating a high order of female education to provide for a new order of things.

We of the present generation, who have become familiarised with great educational triumphs, may see nothing very wonderful in this resolve of Dr. Murray. But if we go back to the opening years of this century we will

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find that the work he proposed to accomplish was surrounded with difficulties which might dishearten a less resolute man.

Prejudices must be conquered, opposition and misrepresentation must be encountered, and great pecuniary risks must be run: and, hardest task of all, an instrument endowed with the rare qualifications essentially necessary for the Foundress of this new Institute must be found. If she be not fully equal to her mission, her attempt is sure to end in utter failure. The far-seeing Archbishop required not much time to make his selection, and if Frances Ball had no other claims on our respect than the fact that the 'Great Archbishop' selected her for this work, these claims could not be questioned. And if the life of His Grace furnished no other illustration of his profound wisdom, the selection of Frances Ball for the apostolate of the higher education of women would place that wisdom beyond the region of doubt. The spiritual daughter was worthy of her father in Christ, and Mother Mary Teresa Ball lived to realise the expectation of the 'Great Archbishop.' Could a higher eulogium be inscribed on her tomb?

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When Josue, in miraculously passing the Jordan, was preparing to put Israel in possession of their long-wished-for rest, he is ordered by God to erect a monument with stones taken from the river's bed, that in after times when men should ask, 'What mean these stones?' they might be told that they were monuments of one of the last grand triumphs wrought by heaven in the emancipation of His people.

With reverence let us say it, that Loretto, called into existence when the fierce current of bigotry seemed to roll irresistibly between Irish Catholics and the liberty of which for centuries they were robbed, will be a memorial for distant generations of the great mercies of God to this nation. And whilst the name of the 'Great Archbishop,' whose memory will for ever live in the Annals of Loretto, shall for ages serve as a beacon to the pilots of the bark of Irish faith, we will pray that the virtues of Mother Mary Teresa Ball may for ever animate the zeal of her spiritual children in the holiest work ever committed to women's hands—the education of the daughters of their people; and for these daughters of Ireland who shall pass from the

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schools of Loretto, let us ask that the modesty which shone so brilliantly in the lives of the women of Ireland, in times less favoured than theirs, may flourish with even daily increasing beauty; may their mere presence elicit from those around them the ejaculations of the Wise Man: 'O how beautiful is the chaste generation with glory: for the memory thereof is immortal: because it is known both with God and men. When it is present, they imitate it: and they desire it when it hath withdrawn itself, and it triumpheth crowned for ever, winning the reward of undefiled conflicts.' (Wisd. iv. 1, 2.)

✠ EDWARD,

Archbishop of Dublin, &c.

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PREFACE.

To the Rev. Mother Xaveria Fallon, Superior-General of the Irish Branch of the Institute of the Blessed Virgin.

Dear Reverend Mother,

I address these few lines to you by way of Preface to the following pages, because no one knows better than yourself how it has come about that the work of compiling them has fallen to my lot.

It might naturally seem presumptuous in one who has never known your first Superior and Foundress, except by her works, to undertake to write her life. It is true that England has a claim on her, in that she was trained in the religious life, as well as in secular learning, within the walls of the holy Home in which I am now writing, and where the memory of her stay, both as a child and as a young Religious, is affectionately

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cherished. It is true that the Institute which she was called by Providence to introduce into Ireland has long been known, as it is still known, abroad by the name of the 'English Ladies' or 'English Virgins' from whose zeal and piety it first sprung. These facts might justify an Englishman in putting together the life of an Irish Foundress, even were it not also true that in the Catholic Church there are no distinctions of nationality, and that no part of the British Empire can be without a lively interest in the character of one, whose spiritual children are labouring in the holy cause of education in almost every land which owns the sway of that Empire.

But you also know at whose request it was that this work has been undertaken, and that I have throughout attempted little more than to put in order the materials with which you have yourselves furnished me. The greater part of the work, therefore, is not mine, and it has only been done at all because I could not refuse to do it. Such as it is, I commit this Life of Mother Mary Teresa to your kind indulgence, thankful only to have been allowed in any way to bear a part in doing public honour to one who was so

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singlehearted and energetic in her service to God, and whose memory is so tenderly venerated by all those who had the privilege of knowing her and working with her.

I am ever,
Dear Reverend Mother,
Your faithful servant in Christ,

H. J. COLERIDGE.

St. Mary's Convent, Micklegate York,
Feast of St. Bartholomew, 1880.

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MOTHER MARY TERESA BALL.

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CHAPTER I.

A Great Archbishop.

IT is always the characteristic of the history of the Church, that while she suffers and seems to lose ground in some parts of the world at any given time, she is rewarded and consoled by progress and increasing fruitfulness elsewhere. The same periods which are full of indications of comparative decay in one continent, are the times when she multiplies her children and extends her dominions in another. The loss of a large part of Northern Europe, in the century which immediately followed the outbreak of the so-called Reformation, was made up to her by the opening of new fields of labour and suffering to her apostles and martyrs in the far East and in the New World. In the course of the present century, the Church has been sorely afflicted in many countries of Europe, which were of old the scenes of her greatest triumphs or her most secure possession. On the other hand, she has been largely compensated for her calamities, in

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Italy and France and elsewhere, by the revival which has been witnessed in Ireland and in England, and by the extraordinary fertility of her labours in North America. To say this is almost the same thing as to say that the Church, in each part of the world, has her successive seasons of prosperity and adversity, her chilling winters, her springs of promise, her summers of glory, and her fruitful autumns. She can never afford to rest in peace and ease upon her past successes; and if at any place or time she is comparatively inactive, she is liable at the same time to the danger which must ever attend inaction in the struggle which she has to maintain, 'not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the world of this darkness, against the spirits of wickedness in the high places.'[1]

Wherever, and to whatever races or classes, the peaceful sway of the Church extends, her children are bound together in one happy communion of love and brotherly concord. It is the law of her existence that the same life breathes and thrills through the whole of her body, and that the prosperity or affliction of any one part is felt with the most tender sympathy

[1] Eph. vi. 12.

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by all the others. 'Whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or if one member glory, all the members rejoice with it.'[2] But it is still natural for us to feel an intense gratitude to the loving Providence under which we live, when we find ourselves in that part of the battlefield where victory, rather than defeat and discouragement, is the lot of the combatants for the cause of God. And if this be so, we may well thank God with especial fervour that we live in the days when the Church in Ireland and England is visited, after so long a period of darkness and persecution, by one of those gleams of sunshine and comparative triumph which have been so long denied to the spiritual children of St. Patrick and St. Augustine.

The history of the development, in the century in which we live, of the spiritual and religious life of the ever faithful but deeply-tried land, which owes its faith and all its glories to St. Patrick, is certainly one of the brightest pages in the annals of the Church of this century. The prospects of the country seemed dark, indeed, after the extinction of the rising in 1798, and the Act of Union which put an end to the Legis-

[2] 1 Cor. xii., 26.

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lative independence of Ireland. The Emancipation of Catholics, in the sense of their full equality with the Protestant minority of the country, was still long to be delayed. Politically and socially, the immediate effect of the late legislation was, indeed, to lighten the fetters under which the Catholics had so long groaned, but still to leave them in the condition of helplessness and degradation to which so many years of oppression had reduced them, without affording them any help in their endeavours to rise. Everything was to be done, and they had no resources but their own wherewith to do it; yet the religious revival and development did not linger. The earlier years of the present century are full of indications of the coming prosperity; and long before the Church had begun to show her wonderful power of growth in North America, and to lift up her head once more even in England and Scotland, she was showing in Ireland every mark of great and rapid advance. The days of persecution were over, though the time of full freedom was yet to come. The Church, in truth, requires only peace to enable her to advance. Nothing but violent repression could stunt her power of growth in Ireland; and though poor and still labouring under a number of social

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disadvantages, her children were full of energy and enthusiasm, and her soil teemed with active and enterprising souls, a large proportion of whom were ready to spend their lives in the service of the altar and in restoring the beauty of the spiritual sanctuary. The Church required great souls for her service, and they were not denied to her. As is always the case, too many of these distinguished servants of the Church have passed away, leaving behind them but little that will remain to remind posterity of its debt of gratitude to them. Providence has dealt otherwise in the case of a few, whose works still live to attest, by their stability and strength, the noble generosity and solid wisdom of the generation which gave them birth. It is with one of these that we are now concerned.

Foremost among the great names of the Irish Church at this period of revival and fertility, both in hierarchical position and in the brilliancy of the results of his labours, stands that of Daniel Murray, Archbishop of Dublin. His pontificate extended, if we count the years during which he was Coadjutor to Archbishop Troy, from 1809 to 1852, and he was thus at the head of the affairs of the Church in Ireland for considerably more than a generation. His life bridges over

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the space of time during which the most remarkable development of Catholicism in Ireland took place. He had known the days when it was inevitable for an Irish Catholic ecclesiastic to seek his education abroad; and like so many of his most distinguished contemporaries, his theological training had been acquired at Salamanca. He had known the dangers of the days of 1798, and is said to have barely escaped with his life, after his parish priest had been shot in his bed. He lived to see the Emancipation of Catholics by the exertions of O'Connell, and to protest with efficacy against the abortive attempt of the Government of Lord John Russell to revive the persecuting temper in England, on the occasion of the restoration of the Catholic Hierarchy in that country. When he died, in 1852, as full of years as of honourable labours for the service of the Master whom he loved so devotedly, he left behind him a diocese in which the amount of progress and increase which he had witnessed was little short of miraculous. We need not linger now on the number of churches which had been built out of the alms of the poor, the immense increase of schools, of religious institutions, of charitable associations, of educational establishments for the clergy and the laity alike; our

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immediate business lies with a part of the work of this great archbishop, which was probably as dear to his own heart as any other—the work which he accomplished in the foundation of the religious Institutes with which his name will be for ever connected.

In the share which, in various ways, he took in the foundation of the three Institutes of the Irish Sisters of Charity, the Sisters of the Institute of the Blessed Virgin, commonly known as the Nuns of Loretto, and of the Sisters of Mercy, Dr. Murray displayed, more almost than in any other of his great achievements, the singular combination of prudence and energy which was characteristic in him. The objects for which these Institutes were founded were not peculiar to Ireland, for the work of charity to the sick and the poor, and of the education of all classes alike, is a work which must be provided for in every portion of the Catholic world, and it is a work which has never been so successfully accomplished as when it has been generously placed in the hands of religious men and women specially devoted to the purpose. It was open to Dr. Murray to do as has been done elsewhere, and to import into his diocese bodies of foreign religious, who might become the nucleus round

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which a number of devoted souls might in time gather. Dr. Murray seems to have thought of this plan in the case of the Sisters of Charity, whose very name still shows the intention with which they were called into being; but in this case, as in that of the other Institutes just named, he trusted ultimately to the prolific spiritual life of the Irish nation itself.

To reward this loving confidence, Providence furnished him with the associates and instruments of which he was in need, as it also furnished him with the material means which his great designs required. He himself had a very large share in the spiritual formation of those chosen souls, who were thus in a double sense his children. His own deep piety and lofty spiritual wisdom were thus elements in the great work which he left behind him, as essential as even his ecclesiastical zeal and sagacity. He was not only a great ruler in the Church, he was the father of a generation of saintly souls, few of which can have soared higher than himself in the regions of Christian perfection. He did not merely approve and allow of the enterprises conceived by others, though that is often the work of eminent servants of the Church. Dr. Murray was himself the

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conceiver of a large portion of the great undertakings which made his Archiepiscopate so memorable in the annals of Catholic Ireland.

It is somewhat saddening to reflect how many of the great servants of the Church, in each generation, pass away from memory within a comparatively short space of time from the end of their visible labours. No doubt, the time for the full glorifying of those who have 'instructed many to justice' is in the next world. But it is a duty, nevertheless, to 'praise men of renown, our fathers in their generation;' and as their example is so great a part of the contribution which they have brought to the building up of the sanctuary of God, it is certainly desirable that that example should be put on record within as few years as may be after their decease. No one has ever in these later times done more for the Church in England than the great Cardinal Wiseman, and yet his memoirs do not seem to have been yet begun. No one, certainly, has laid the Irish Church under a greater debt of gratitude than Dr. Murray, and yet we have of him only the funeral oration preached at his 'Month's Mind,' illustrated, happily, by very full notes, so as to supply in some measure the temporary wants of

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a more complete biography.[3] We shall use these notes without scruple for the slight notice which it is natural to give, at the beginning of the life of one of his most devoted spiritual daughters, to the memory of one to whom she owed not only, under God, her vocation, but the whole direction of the work to which she was called, and the training which she received for it, to be handed on to others after her. Daniel Murray is the true father of the work and the spiritual progeny of Frances Ball.

Dr. Murray was born at Sheepwalk, near Arklow, in April, 1768. His first education was received in Dublin from the lips of the famous Dr. Betagh, formerly a Jesuit, but who had been driven from his religious home by the suppression of the Society, and who afterwards led a long and laborious life in the metropolis of his country, the soul of all the Catholic movement there. A hard-working priest, a powerful preacher, a devoted instructor of youth and guide of souls, he became Vicar-General of the diocese of Dublin, but did not live to see the actual restoration of the Society which he loved so dearly,

3 'Notices of the Life and Character of the Most Rev. Daniel Murray, late Archbishop of Dublin,' &c. By the Rev. W. Meagher, P.P. Dublin, 1853.

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though his heart was always longing for it, and though he prepared many of those who were its first and best members after its restoration, for their entrance into it as soon as that was possible. Among these pupils of Dr. Betagh was the famous Father Kenny. Daniel Murray proceeded in due course to the College at Salamanca, at which so many of the clergy and bishops of Ireland were trained in sacred learning, until the time when the foundation and success of the great College of Maynooth supplied the country with a seminary for its future priests and bishops on its own soil. He was ordained priest in 1790. On returning to Ireland, he began his labours for the Church as curate in the parish of St. Paul, Dublin, and was afterwards stationed for a short time at his native place, Arklow. Here he endured the storm of the troubled times of 1798. The old priest, whose assistant he was, was murdered in his bed at night, Dr. Murray only escaping after having run the risk of his own life. Returning to Dublin, he attracted the attention and won the confidence of Dr. Troy, the Archbishop. It was by the choice of this prelate that he became Coadjutor in 1809, being consecrated on St. Andrew's Day of that year. The choice delighted the clergy as much as it afflicted himself.

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The learned and eloquent preacher whose sermon we are more or less following, selects as the special characteristics of Dr. Murray in the discharge of his duties as bishop, first, his great industry and indefatigable laboriousness, then his singular prudence, then his gentleness, and finally, his most conciliatory and winning kindness to those outside the fold of the Church. As is so often found to be the case in great servants of God, his extreme gentleness and meekness were accompanied by a singular courage and firmness in the discharge of duty and in the maintenance of principle. Dr. Murray's fearlessness and resolution were shown especially in the important question of the *Veto*, which began to trouble the Church a few years after his elevation. The English Government had rendered great services to the persecuted Pontiff, Pius VII., and when he had returned in triumph and peace to Rome, it was proposed that he should reward these services by conceding to the Government of the king at least a *Veto* on the appointment of the Irish Catholic Bishops. This measure, however, was opposed by all the most loyal and intelligent servants of the Holy See in Ireland, and it required all their exertions to avert the calamity. In this vital

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struggle Dr. Murray was as much the champion in Ireland of the freedom of the Church as Dr. Milner in England. He was twice sent to Rome by the body of Irish Bishops to lay their remonstrances at the feet of the Vicar of Jesus Christ. As always, there were weak-kneed Catholics ready to assist the Government in its demands. The cause was in much danger, until Dr. Murray succeeded in persuading the authorities at Rome that the opposition to the measure was most strong and universal in Ireland itself. After his return, and before the final decision had been arrived at, he preached a very famous sermon in Dublin on the Good Friday of 1816, in which he appealed to the Catholics who were lending a helping hand to the enslavement of the Church. He compared such a policy to the binding of our Lord to the column before the scourging. 'To this bound and suffering Victim, I would now implore the attention of those misguided Catholics who seem willing to impose new and disgraceful bonds, not, indeed, on His Sacred Person, but on His Mystical Body, that is, His Church, which was ever more dear to Him than His personal liberty—more dear to Him even than His life. Does not St. Paul[4] assure us that

[4] Eph. v. 26, 27.

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for this Mystical Body He "delivered Himself up . . . that He might present to Himself a glorious Church not having spot or wrinkle . . but that it should be holy and without blemish?" And could we suppose that it would be more painful to Him to submit His Sacred Hands to the ignominious cords, than to see this Church bound and fettered by restrictions which would render it less capable of fulfilling the object for which it was formed—the object for which He poured out His most precious Life? . . . Unhappily, it is now too well known that the conciliation which is expected is such as would imply the degradation and enslavement of the sacred ministry. And what virtuous Catholic would consent to purchase the chance of temporal advantages at the price of such a real spiritual calamity? Oh! if the stroke must come, let it come from those who have so long sought the extinction of our religion; but, in the name of God, let no Catholic press forward to share in the inglorious work. Let no one among us be found to say of his Church, as the treacherous disciple said of its divine Founder, "what will you give me, and I will deliver Him unto you?"' This powerful appeal is said to have had a decisive effect at the time in settling the question, at least in Ireland.

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Dr. Murray took an equally vigorous part in a later conflict, when it was not the freedom of the Irish hierarchy which was at stake, but the immunity from persecution of the hierarchy of the Catholic Church in England. As soon as it became manifest that the ever-ready bigotry of Protestant England was to be appealed to by the Ministry of the day, for political purposes, Dr. Murray, then, of course, Archbishop of Dublin, called a meeting of his clergy, and drew up himself a series of vigorous resolutions denouncing the persecution which seemed to be threatening the Catholics of England in the person of Cardinal Wiseman. In the same spirit, he issued a strong protest against the Ecclesiastical Titles Bill of the Government of Lord John Russell, when it was first presented to Parliament: a bill of which he spoke as 'subversive of religious discipline, hostile to the freedom of religious worship, and fraught with mischief to the interests of the poor.' The effect of this pastoral letter was very great, and showed the high esteem and respect in which its author was so universally held. The Government felt that it was necessary, when a man so usually gentle and conciliating as Dr. Murray could speak in such terms, to modify the bill conside-

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rably, and the most obnoxious clauses were, in consequence, immediately struck out. The Archbishop of Dublin was thus able to protect the Catholics of England by the veneration which he had won from men of all parties in both countries.

The esteem felt for Dr. Murray by those in power and by those external to the Church, was but a faint echo of the deep feeling of love and veneration with which his own people regarded him. He was always at their service. In the earlier years of his administration he was a constant preacher, though he was afterwards obliged to devote himself more exclusively to the work of the diocese. It is said of him that he gained his success in the pulpit by great painstaking, struggling against many natural deficiencies of voice and memory which would have daunted a less single-hearted and resolute servant of His Master. 'Heaven,' says his only biographer, 'which saw the uprightness of his intentions, and the eagerness with which he sought to execute them, enabled him to convert his very defects into occasions of pre-eminent success. His slender voice and halting memory led to that calm, and soft, and deliberate enunciation which, managed with his exquisite taste and

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skill, so charmed his hearers, making every word to tell, and every argument to convince. He often spoke but in a whisper, and never raised his voice beyond a moderate pitch, and yet he was heard perfectly by every individual in crowded assemblages, and excited amongst them frequently the most thrilling effects. His presence in the pulpit was so solemn, his demeanour so serene and dignified, his utterance so distinct and impressive, his emphasis so correct, his tones so appropriate, the silence of the wrapt audience so profound, that it became at times a very fascination to listen to him. It was a piety the tenderest, the sincerest, wearing the most faultless embellishments of truest art. And thus, while eloquence seldom produced a deeper, it never produced a more legitimate, effect. No one was taken by surprise, no one was entrapped into persuasion, plain truths in plain language, told in a low voice, with but slight exertion, and almost no gesture, by their innate importance, and the happy order in which they were arranged, and the affecting sincerity with which they were uttered, swayed multitudes to results which the most pretending rhetoricians might envy, the most gifted aim at in vain.'

The days in which Dr. Murray became Arch-

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bishop of Dublin were days in which long and elaborate sermons were expected from the preachers, and it was perhaps on this account that, when his time came to be fully occupied by the cares of administration and government, he did not so often ascend the pulpit as in the life-time of Archbishop Troy. He excelled in plain earnest addresses to the people, at the times of his visitations and confirmations, but beyond these he does not seem to have kept up the practice of frequent preaching. We have mentioned the opinion he was not naturally possessed of very brilliant talents, but that he made up for his deficiencies in this respect by hard work and mental application. How this may have been we know not. It is certain that he accomplished, in the long years during which he governed the archdiocese of Dublin, a very great work, indeed, for the Church. No one, however brilliant, could have done more. The characteristic of his policy which it belongs to our present subject more especially to attend to, was the large-hearted breadth of his views, especially in the admission to the field of labour committed to his charge, of Religious Orders, three of which, as has been said, owe their existence to him. Indeed, a very prominent feature of his adminis-

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tration was his wisdom in this respect. Besides founding the Sisters of Charity and the Institute of Loretto, of which we are to speak in these pages, and besides being, in truth, the foster-father of the work begun by Catharine Macauley and her companions, out of which, almost without their knowing it, the Institute of the Sisters of Mercy sprang, Dr. Murray welcomed into his diocese the Fathers of the Society of Jesus, and the Xaverian Brothers, as well as the priests of St. Vincent of Paul, commonly called Lazarists. He promoted the Association of Charity for ladies, one of the so-called minor works of the great St. Vincent, as well as the Society of St. Vincent, started in our own days by Frederic Ozanam, in Paris, and at the present moment so fruitful of good in every part of the Catholic world. In the same way Dr. Murray took the deepest interest in another great creation of Catholic zeal, which we owe to another native of Lyons, the work of the Propagation of the Faith. But he did far more than this for the advancement of the Catholic religion, where it was before unknown, by fostering the noble enterprise of the foundation of the great missionary College of All Hallows, a college which has hardly a rival in the Catholic world as a nursery of the foreign Apos-

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tolate. The number of new churches raised in the diocese during the administration of Dr. Murray was a few short of a hundred. They are said to have cost about £70,000. Within the same time more than 220 schools were built in the forty-eight parishes of his archdiocese. The whole amount of the property acquired by the Church in his time is reckoned at £1,200,000, the greater part of which must have come from the poor and the middle classes.

But the work of such a pastor must not be measured by its natural and visible results alone. At the time when Dr. Murray was first called to his work at Dublin, we are told by the eloquent ecclesiastic who was called on to preach at his 'Month's Mind,' that, 'with the single exception of the Church of St. Teresa, just erected, not another place of Catholic worship was to be found within our walls that at the present hour would merit the name of decent; and all of them, such as they were, crouching timidly in the darkest and most loathsome alleys and lanes of the city. The education of the youth of all ages was, almost exclusively, in the hands of Protestants. There was one valuable school for poor female children —that of the good Sisters of the Presentation at George's-Hill—and one or two for boys of the

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same class, instituted and upheld by the venerable Betagh. . . . And yet then as now the city was brimful of Catholics, and Catholics very thankful, too, for the peace and prosperity they enjoyed, so superior to that with which their immediate predecessors were forced to be satisfied.' . . . At the same time, the action of Protestant proselytism was as vigorous as ever before or since; the bribing of parents and the purchases of children went on as unblushingly as ever. The Press was full of calumnies against the faith. There was half-heartedness and division among the Catholics themselves. 'There was the fatal treason which consists in a general depravation of Christian manners—the prolific cause of more ruin to religion than all the power combined of earth and hell—and Catholics were contending among themselves whether or not they should sell the purity, and the independence, and efficiency of their chiefs for the sorry baubles that cunning politicians offered in exchange. The morals of the people of Dublin, Catholics among the rest, were hideously corrupted. The riches daily scattered through her streets in handfuls to purchase the luxuries of an opulent, profuse, and dissolute aristocracy, the easy and plentiful earnings of flourishing manufacture and

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of extensive and successful commerce, were seized every hour through a series of years for indulgence of the wildest, vilest libertinism and wildest extravagance.' Vice of every kind, even the grossest was rampant. At the same time the usual misery of large towns was there in abundance. 'There was in our city as large an amount of physical wretchedness, particularly among the lower ranks, then as now; as much squalid poverty, as much shivering nakedness, as much famine-stricken emaciation, as many ruined families, as many homeless orphans. Vice did more to fill the town with the agonies of human suffering than famine and plague and abject poverty have wrought in these latter days of woe.'

The preacher asserts that these miseries were as rife among Catholics as among Protestants. 'Amid opportunities so numerous, examples so seductive, temptations so violent, with but a handful of clergy and a dozen incommodious chapels to second the proverbial faith and innate pious tendencies of the people, what wonder that the multitude was hurried away in this torrent of iniquity? And the mortifying truth is, that in Dublin, at the period alluded to, amid many Catholics there were but few practical

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Christians; very few whose lives supplied that substantial and only unerring proof of profitable attachment to the faith, the constant and regular frequentation of the Holy Sacraments. As the climax of her griefs, religion had to weep, for the first time, perhaps, in this land, over the faltering fidelity and submission of many a son, led astray by the frenzy of recent revolution, and the false liberality of the day, and the desolating philosophism of France.'

It would be idle to attribute to any one person or cause the immense change, moral and religious, which is seen by the comparison between the Dublin of the first years of Dr. Murray's episcopate and the Dublin of his last years. He had the happiness of ruling in a time of great religious revival, not only in Ireland, but in England and in many other parts of the civilised world. But it is a great praise to a ruler of the Church to have been always at the head of the movement towards greater good, to have guided rather than to have followed, to have left his own mark for special benefits on the times and flock with which he had to deal, to have initiated so much himself, and have fostered so much good which others initiated, and, above all, never to have hindered any. If Dr. Murray were indeed, as we

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see no reason for thinking, a man of less than the highest intellectual calibre, the results of his episcopate would only show in still greater clearness the moral and spiritual powers which he brought to the discharge of his immense responsibilities. The greatest intellectual gifts do not always succeed in positions like his, if they are allied, even in the most distant degree, to personal ambition, jealousy of others, and narrow-mindedness. In such cases great undertakings often fail, and great opportunities are often lost. With Dr. Murray certainly it was not so. If it can be recorded of him, as has already been said a few pages back, that during his episcopate 97 churches, great and small, had been erected in his archdiocese, at the estimated cost of little less than £700,000; if in the 48 parishes of the diocese 220 schools for boys and girls had been built for the benefit of the Catholic poor; if the property acquired by the Church in his time—the greater part of which must have come from the industrious poor or commercial classes—is reckoned at about £1,200,000, this is not all the glory of Daniel Murray. His glory is that in all this tide of success he sought and took nothing for himself but hard labour; that he was as unassuming as the great Archbishop as he had

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been as the humble curate, and that when the time came for his people to bewail his loss, he was mourned for not so much as a powerful ecclesiastial personage as a Father and a Saint.

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CHAPTER II.

Frances Ball.

Dr. MURRAY had not long been coadjutor to the venerable prelate whom he was afterwards to succeed as Archbishop of Dublin, when Dr. Troy took him with him on a visit of condolence to a good Catholic family which had lately lost the father and husband who had been its main-stay. The family of the Balls lived in Eccles-street; and John Ball, lately dead, had been a prosperous and highly respected merchant. His wife, Mabel Clare Bennet, is described to us as a modest, retiring Christian lady, full of good works and of religious care for her family. The youngest of their six children, Frances, was fourteen at the time of her father's death, in 1808. She had been born in 1794, on January the 9th. We have but few records of her early childhood, but it is certain that she was, from the first, carefully trained by her good mother for piety and virtue. At the age of nine she had been sent to the Convent School at The Bar,

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York—at that time the most favourite place of female education for Catholics both in England and in Ireland.

At the time at which we are writing of one who had to transplant its spirit elsewhere, that venerable convent has been in existence just two hundred years, though the ladies of whom that community had been composed at its first outset had been working for the Church, especially in the way of education, for some years before that date. This is not the place to speak at any length of the history of the origin of the community, or of the long years of quiet, and often dangerous toil, during which successive generations of inmates of that most venerable house of prayer and study had devoted themselves within its walls to their holy vocation. The Convent of the Bar is one of the great and singular glories of Catholic England under the years of persecution, which can never be eclipsed, even by the most brilliant success which have attended other works of the same kind under a less difficult state of affairs. An offshoot of an Institute which has conferred immense benefits, in the way of education, on several Catholic countries of the Continent, this convent was always, like the Institute itself in its origin,

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a thoroughly English product of true Catholic zeal and self-sacrifice. In this respect it possesses an interest entirely its own.

When Frances Ball entered for the first time the walls of this Convent it was, as it is at present, a flourishing community, with the traditions of the days of persecution alive within its walls, and full of that spiritual vigour and solid piety which characterise the houses of the Institute of the Blessed Virgin wherever they are to be found. As will be seen, Frances Ball was to owe to the Ladies of the Bar, as they were commonly called, a something more than the rudiments of education and intellectual training. As she was the youngest child of her parents she found an elder sister, Anna Maria, just leaving the school as she entered it. Anna Maria took her little sister into the garden on the summer evening just before her own departure, and, among other endearing and tender memories of this last interview, the child used in after years to call to mind how the elder girl had said to her solemnly that she was to seek first the Kingdom of God and His justice, and all other things would be added to her. The paths in life of these two noble souls were to be outwardly very different; for Anna Maria married, and Frances became what we shall have to relate.

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But, in the midst of society itself, the elder girl did not forget the lesson which she had impressed on the younger, and her virtues and charitable works render her life a beautiful commentary on the sacred text of the Sermon on the Mount.

We have but few incidents preserved to us concerning the school days of Frances. She was probably taken to see the beautiful and stately Cathedral at York before entering the school, as it was not allowed to Irish Catholics to visit in their own country the far poorer remains of the ancient Faith which were given up to the Anglican worship. All her life Frances had a great love for the grand old buildings of the ages of faith, and the style in which they were raised, and this love has left its traces behind it in many works of her piety and devotion, especially in the Church of Rathfarnham Abbey, of which she herself drew the designs. Frances was in her twelfth year when she received her first Communion, and the transports of her soul on that blessed occasion were so great that she could always use them as the standard by which to measure especially great joys of this holy kind. The practice, adopted in imitation of the Society of Jesus, which now prevails in so many convents, of forming the elder and more pious

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girls into a sodality of 'Children of Mary,' was not yet introduced at York, but the pupils were allowed to meet in a small association of their own for special prayers and devotions, and in this little company Frances was remarkable. She took, by her own choice, the name of St. Scholastica, to whom she always had a tender devotion. The names of some of her particular friends at school are preserved—two of these were Spaniards, Elena Roberts, mother of Mary Conception Lopez, a famous religious of the Institute of which we shall have to speak, and Christina Gordon, who afterwards occupied a position of considerable importance at the Court of Queen Isabella, where she was revered as a saint. The teachers in the Convent School were ordinarily the nuns themselves, but Frances and her companions had unusual advantages in being able to learn their French from a refugee lady, Madame de Chantal, allied to the Bourbon family, who resided in the convent, and took part in the education. But it is of little use to attempt to recover the details of the life of a happy, bright, and clever school girl. The friendships formed at such a time are not often very durable, and when they remain so, notwithstanding the effect of long years of separation, it

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is reasonable to think that the souls which were thus linked together, as was the case with Frances Ball and those we have mentioned, must have had some sterling qualities and some unusual attractiveness.

Frances remained at York until her father's death, in 1808, the year before the consecration of Dr. Murray as Coadjutor-Bishop to Archbishop Troy. Her education was not yet completed, and perhaps if she had remained, as might have been expected, at the school, she might have become one of the many useful and eminent religious who have passed almost directly from the class-room to the novitiate, and her name might have been in honour, as one of the 'ladies of the Bar.' But her widowed mother could not do without her. She was the last child of the father just taken away; and besides, it seems clear that, attractive as she was all through her life, there was something remarkably sweet about her as a child. So Mrs. Ball determined to keep her at home. The education at the Bar was then, as it probably still is, very excellent. Frances Ball had made great progress, and had shown the promise of unusual talents. She was a bright, quiet, high-spirited girl, fond of fun, and with much depth of charac-

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ter. Whatever may have been her losses, in the matter of simple education and study, by her premature removal from the school to live with her mother, there can be little doubt that she was one of those children whose characters ripen and strengthen fast by living with persons older than themselves. But the great blessing of all which her removal from school brought to her, was that she became the spiritual child and close friend, as far as their difference of age permitted, of Dr. Murray, who, a year after her return to Dublin, was consecrated Coadjutor-Bishop, as has already been said.

Dr. Murray was already occupying himself with the projects for the advancement of God's glory, for the accomplishment of which his episcopate was so remarkable. He was the centre of the religious activity and enterprise of Dublin, and had already gathered round him, to some extent at least, a chosen band of devoted souls, who were afterwards to aid him in their various vocations. One of these was Mrs. O'Brien, the elder sister, Anna Maria, of whom mention has already been made, and who had married during the years of Fanny's schooling at York. Her husband, like John Ball, was a prosperous merchant. He allowed his young bride full liberty

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to follow her inclinations for the support of charitable and religious works, while both maintained and discharged all the duties of their prominent social position, undismayed by the lingering traditions of the days when Catholics had been thought unfit for anything but self-obliteration and the contempt of others. Cecilia Ball, the eldest sister of Frances, was professed at the Ursuline Convent, at Cork, in the year 1807, and Frances must have been at home at the time, as she came from Dublin to Cork for the ceremony, and there first met the well-known Mary Aikenhead, whom Dr. Murray was soon to make his instrument in the foundation of the Irish Sisters of Charity, and who was to make her novitiate at York as a preparation for her great work. Mrs. O'Brien's position in Dublin, and her devotion to good works of all kinds, especially in favour of the poor, must have opened to her younger sister the acquaintance of a considerable number of other ladies who were labouring in various ways for the Church. But, as has been said, the chief blessing of this period of the life of Frances seems to have been the guidance of her soul by Dr. Murray.

We can only judge of this guidance, however, by the single feature in it of which record remains

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to us. Dr. Murray, at a time when the strict theology, which had been made prevalent by the indirect influence of Jansenism on many a virtuous and good soul who was anything rather than a Jansenist, was still in force, allowed and encouraged his young spiritual daughter in the practice of frequent communion, even on successive days. It is easy to imagine what must have been the effect of this transcendent privilege on so simple and pure a soul as that of Frances Ball. For the other details of her life during the four years which passed after her return home and before her first thoughts of a religious vocation we have no records whatever to rely on. Young as she was at this time, she can hardly have plunged very deeply into the stream of gaiety and dissipation: and what we know of her mother and sisters—another of whom was married to Mr. Sherlock—does not lead us to suppose that they would have forced worldliness upon her against her will. She was happy in her life with her mother, in the opportunities she had of working for the altar and serving the poor, though she had as yet no distinct idea of forsaking the world. She was constantly in contact with the mind of her holy and zealous director, full as he was of

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schemes and desires for the advancement of good works of every kind, and almost overwhelmed, perhaps, with the consciousness of the great work which lay before him, of the abundant harvest of souls and of the fewness of the labourers who could be got to volunteer for the work. But if Dr. Murray desired to see his spiritual child consecrate herself, like her sister Cecilia, to the service of God in the religious state, he did not say so. He allowed grace to work in its own way, and was careful not to forestall the breathings of the divine lover of souls.

It may well be imagined that the thought of the future, and of the manner in which she might be called to make herself more entirely bound to the service of the Lord Whom she already loved so devotedly, was not a stranger to the heart of this innocent girl. Her director, we are told, trained her especially in obedience, and more than once put her to the test in the practice of this fundamental virtue. But he did not, as we have said, give her any intimation as to his thoughts about her vocation. The occasion came in due time. Too much need not be made of the seemingly casual incidents by which a soul so often finds out what has been long pre-

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paring for it in the counsels of God. Such incidents are often only the final links of a long chain of secret, but, at the time, unrecognised promptings of the Holy Spirit—promptings which have not been neglected, but the meaning of which has not been fully seen. Frances Ball had probably many a quiet intimation of what our Lord might require of her, and the whole bent of her soul and heart may have been in the direction in which she was ultimately guided. Her history is not that of a soul which had to struggle long against the resistance of nature to the call of God. One evening she was taken by her mother to a dance, and entered into the innocent enjoyments for which her graceful attractiveness so well fitted her, with a subdued and chastened gaiety, for she was to go to communion the next morning, and the thought of once more receiving our Lord was in her mind, amid the dancing and conversation. As midnight approached, she asked her mother that they might leave the ball. Her mother bade her wait yet awhile, as the dancing had not long begun. Frances could only obey, but she did not dance any more; she sat down, and, in the midst of conversation, made a mental preparation for her communion. They did not leave the house of

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their entertainers till nearly three in the morning, but she was up again for early Mass, at which she communicated. But when at breakfast she proposed to her mother to go again to Mass and to stay for a sermon, her mother objected, on the ground that she had need of rest after the fatigues of the previous night. Frances obeyed, without a word, and went to her own room to spend the morning in quiet devotion.

This was the little incident to which Frances Ball afterwards looked back as having decided her to seek admission into religion. She was ruffled at the thought that it should be necessary to forego the service of God for the consequences of the enjoyments, such as they are, of the world. The text which her sister had impressed upon her, to seek first the kingdom of God and His justice, came back to her mind on that quiet morning, and she added to it that other from the same divine Sermon, 'you cannot serve two masters.' The effect on a heart so well prepared as hers may easily be guessed. She made her determination that morning to seek to leave the world entirely. She made her offering of herself to God, and it only remained to lay the matter before the guide of her soul and follow his decision and advice in

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the manner and time of the execution of her desire.[1]

Frances lost no time in laying her thoughts before her director. Dr. Murray may have seen the dawnings of her religious vocation before she was conscious to herself of any such tendency. He may even have longed, in the true spirit of an apostle, to be able to guide this choice and most innocent soul to some institute

[1] It is not quite easy to fix the date of this eventful day in the life of Frances Ball. The accounts which have come down to us state that the ball was on the 4th of March, and on a Saturday evening. This last particular must be erroneous. Frances began her eighteenth year in January, 1812, and the incident is said to have occurred in her eighteenth year. In 1812 the 4th of March—she is likely to have remembered the day of the month—fell on the Wednesday of the third week of Lent. If we put on the year to 1813, when she was nineteen, the 4th of March was the Thursday after Ash Wednesday. In 1814—the last possible year—it was the Friday of the first week in Lent. It seems not to have been thought wrong by the Catholics of Dublin to go to balls in Lent, but we may fairly doubt whether the balls would have been continued after midnight on a Saturday. In 1811, the 4th of March was on a Monday. It seems as if the story as to the Saturday night had grown out of the fact that Frances went to Communion the next morning, and wanted to go to a later Mass for the sermon; but it seems that at that time there were sermons every day in Lent in the Dominican Convent in Denmark-street.

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where her great natural qualities of heart and head might be ennobled and improved by divine grace, and turned to the profit not only of her own soul, but of thousands of others. Such men as Dr. Murray are usually on the look out for instruments which may be turned to the many great wants of souls and the many purposes of the divine glory, of which they are too sadly conscious that the means are as yet lacking. But if he had any such thoughts as to the future work of Frances Ball, Dr. Murray was too prudent and too reverent of the movements of the Holy Ghost to be in any hurry to begin the work too soon. He bade his faithful and docile child wait for three years, in prayer, and say nothing about her contemplated step in the interval. She was eighteen, we are told, at the time of this incident of her vocation; and we shall see that she was in her twenty-first year before she took the final step of leaving her home for the walls of a convent.

Just about the time of this turn in the life of Frances Ball, her kind friend and director was engaged in bringing about the foundation of one of the great works for which the Church of Ireland is indebted to him. It was in the early summer of this same year, 1812, in the spring of

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which the incident of the ball occurred, that he was able to send to York the two postulants who were destined, in his mind, to begin the work of the Sisters of Charity in Ireland. The two companions—Mary Aikenhead and Cecilia Walsh—left Dublin on Trinity Sunday in that year. The plan of the Sisters of Charity was as yet far from mature, even in the mind of its conceiver. Dr. Murray had desired in the first instance to found a congregation which should do the work and bear the name of the famous daughters of St. Vincent de Paul. For the sake of this, he was ready to affiliate his own religious to the community in France, and it was not until he found that they would be altogether too dependent on the French Superiors to work as he would wish, that he altered his plan to that which afterwards became the Institute of the Irish Sisters of Charity, who differ widely in rule and in spirit from the '*Filles de la Charité*' who are so well known in every part of the Christian world.

It is characteristic of Dr. Murray that while he still intended that his congregation should be a *replica*, so to speak, of that of St. Vincent de Paul, he still insisted on sending the two ladies on whom he relied as the first stones of the edifice he was to raise, to make their novitiate at

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York, in order that they might be thoroughly trained in the principles of the interior life, which he considered all important, even for religious whose line of work was to be so mainly external. It is to this determination on the part of Dr. Murray that the Irish Sisters of Charity owe the peculiar spirit, and the interior training, which are the characteristics of their Institute. It is also a mark of the far-sightedness and prudence of Dr. Murray that, at the very time when he was so anxious as he was about the beginnings of the congregation already named, he did not think it necessary either to hasten on the time of the probation which he had fixed on in the case of Frances Ball, or enlist her, as he might possibly have done without great difficulty, in the new undertaking. He resolved to bide his time, and let the Spirit of God work. The result, as we shall see, was that he was able to bring about the foundation of two great religious Institutes instead of one, and to enrich the Irish Church by the services of the noble band of devoted ladies who call Frances Ball their mother, as well as with those of the equally famous congregation which derives its existence from Mary Aikenhead and her companions.

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CHAPTER III.

Leaving Home.

WE are not told how long it was after he had bidden Frances Ball to wait and pray, that Dr. Murray unfolded to her his design for the establishment in Ireland of a branch of the Institute of the Blessed Virgin, for the education of the higher classes as well as of others. It does not seem to have been any choice of her own that directed her to such a work; she was humble enough to shrink, as we shall find her shrinking, even to the last, from the task of founding a new convent. She desired for herself the retirement and shelter of the cloister, that she might be alone with her God, and converse with Him in prayer. The idea of ruling and guiding others was as distasteful to her as that of distracting herself with temporal cares and the various troubles of the management of a convent or a school. But she had, above all things, an obedient and docile soul,

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and it is of such souls that the great instruments for God's glory in active works are formed.

Frances accepted with humble obedience the particular work to which Dr. Murray directed her. She was a person of singular energy and thoughtfulness, and she spent much time during this interval of waiting in preparing herself for the work of education by the cultivation of her own mind. We are told that at this same time her brother, afterwards an eminent judge, was carrying on his studies for the bar, and that she learned from him the practice of putting into words her thoughts on any subject that might have interested her in her reading, and that thus she acquired a certain fluency of speech, for which she was afterwards remarkable, when, as the superior of a community, she came to have the duty of addressing the nuns on the rules or on the great feasts of the Christian year.

Meanwhile, the preparation of the soul and of the heart went on together with that of the mind. She was assiduous in her frequentation of the sacraments and in the practice of prayer. She helped her sister Anna Maria, now Mrs. O'Brien, in her works of charity and mercy, and continued her happy work of caring for the altars in the churches.

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Frances had passed her twentieth birthday when Dr. Murray took the first step in the accomplishment of the plan which he had so long nourished. In Easter week of the year 1814, he wrote to the Superior of the convent at York to propose that Frances should join them, on the understanding that she was to be first of a colony or branch of the Institute of the Blessed Virgin in her native country. His words were not very definite as to the details of the design; but the nuns at York seem to have understood him at once; perhaps some other communications, not now preserved, had passed between them before this letter. "Frances Ball," he says, "has sanguine expectations that she will be able to accomplish her purpose. She means to offer herself as a humble candidate for your Institute, and hopes, though with great difficulty, to obtain her mother's consent, unfettered by any restriction. I cannot give up the hope of seeing a house of your holy institute in this country, and I trust that this little treasure we are sending you may give some colour of claim to that blessing, and may eventually facilitate the means of accomplishing it."

The hopes of which the Archbishop speaks as entertained by Frances of her mother's ulti-

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mate consent without any restriction, were founded, in great measure, on an incident which had happened a few weeks before. Mrs. Ball, deeply religious as she was, was not likely to look upon the prospect of losing her youngest and dearest child without much pain. Such sacrifices are not the less painful to Christian parents because they themselves are strong in faith and piety. On the contrary, it may safely be said that they are more truly painful to those hearts than to others. The love of God does not harden the natural affections, it only intensifies them at the same time that it ennobles, purifies, and elevates them. The heart of our Blessed Lady herself was more full of faith and of resignation to the divine will than any other heart could be, but it was for that very reason her sorrows at the foot of the cross are beyond the comprehension of all others. Mrs. Ball resisted the idea of letting Frances leave her with all the ardour of a true Christian mother, though it was an ardour which was certain to give way to the clear intimation of God's will.

Early in the Lent of the year of which we are speaking (1814), an accident took her into a church which she was not in the habit of frequenting. She found that Mass was not to be

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said that morning where she usually heard it, and so she went into the nearest church she could find. We have already mentioned the Lent Sermons in the Dominican church in Denmark-street, and that may very likely have been the church to which she went on this day; at all events, it was a great feast there, the 7th of March, the day of the angelical doctor St. Thomas of Aquin. A sermon was preached after the Mass, and Mrs. Ball listened to it attentively. The preacher spoke of the marvellous graces of the saint of the day, and how his vocation to the religious state had been resisted by his parents. He enlarged on the misery and sin of such opposition on the part of parents, as well as on its great imprudence and short-sightedness. His words sank down into the heart of Mrs. Ball, and her conscience told her that they might not be without an application to herself. As we do not know at what point of time it was that Mrs. Ball first became aware of her daughter's desire to enter the religious state, it is not easy to say whether, at the moment of which we speak, the vocation of Frances was a thing which she only dreaded as possible, or one which she had openly resisted. Parents and close friends are quick to discern instinctively such

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tendencies in those whom they love, even before they are clearly recognised in the hearts themselves to whom God is speaking. But it is certain that within a few weeks after this time the whole question was practically settled.

We have seen that Dr. Murray's letter to the superior at York does not speak quite plainly, either of the consent of Mrs. Ball, or of the exact manner in which his desire for the establishment of a branch of the Institute of the Blessed Virgin was to be carried out. His language as to the latter of these points is consistent with a plan by which the nuns at York might have sent over a colony from their own community, of which Frances Ball might or might not have been a member. What he says about the expected consent, after difficulties, of Mrs. Ball, may probably refer to some objections which she may have felt as to risking her daughter in a new foundation. Such enterprises are seldom free from a certain amount of risk, and are often exposed to obloquy and derision. It seems likely, therefore, that in the course of the few weeks which had passed between the Feast of St. Thomas and Easter week, Mrs. Ball had withdrawn the refusal ever to part with her

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daughter, which may have been the first answer which she gave to the proposal that Frances should enter religion. But it is clear that the battle was not won all at once. Such battles seldom are. Mrs. Ball may have desired that some longer time of trial should elapse before her child should be taken from her. She may have insisted on her joining, like her sister Cecilia, some community already in existence on Irish soil. If she had heard of the project of the introduction of the Institute of the Blessed Virgin into Ireland, she may have shrunk from the idea of a new foundation as the home of her daughter As to this she may have been unconsciously and silently supported by the wishes of Frances herself.

It is natural to think that the good religious of the Bar would not have been displeased at the prospect of receiving into their own body a postulant of such high promise as Frances Ball, and that it may have been a disappointment to them to find that Dr. Murray contemplated her transfer from the mother house as soon as affairs could be arranged for the beginning of the new undertaking. But there were prudential reasons against their undertaking themselves to furnish

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what would be required for the new foundation, and we find these reasons insisted on in the answer returned to Dr. Murray, after the interval of a few weeks, by the Superior, Mrs. Coyney. The letter is dated May 30th, 1814 (Whit-Monday).

'MY LORD—I have consulted our bishop on the subject of your Lordship's letter, who agrees to our receiving Miss Ball as a member of our holy Institute, with a view to our training her to be the foundress of a house of the same Order in Dublin. In the event of such a project being realised, and that she be allowed sufficient time for that great undertaking, which could not be, at least, under five years, as we cannot hold out a possibility that we can contribute to such an establishment, either by sending a colony from this house or by pecuniary resources, this work must rest solely on Miss Ball and her friends, whose decision we gladly await.

'One favour I particularly request, that it may not be made known to one unnecessary person that Miss Ball is fixed on for the projected foundation. Such a report spread abroad would neither be pleasing to the young lady herself nor to us.

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'With respectful regards to Mrs. Ball, and affectionate remembrance to our young friend, I beg leave to subscribe myself

'Your Lordship's obedient

'servant and daughter in Christ,

'E. M. COYNEY.'

This letter finally settled the question as to the reception of Frances Ball at York. It seems that her mother, perhaps from a hope that she might still be retained in Ireland by choosing another Institute, had arranged before this that she should once again visit her sister Cecilia at the Ursuline Convent at Cork, or perhaps this visit may have had no other object than that the two sisters might once again have the joy of meeting on earth. Seven years had passed since Frances had been present at the profession of Cecilia. The good Ursuline would rejoice at the thought that her sister was to give herself to God in the holy state in which she had herself found so much happiness and peace. The sight of Cecilia would strengthen the resolution of Frances. There was little to be feared for the design of Dr. Murray from such an interview. After this visit to the South there was no longer any cause for delay, except what was

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caused by the letter from York just now quoted. Frances must have left her home very soon after the arrival of the letter of Mrs. Coyney. She was received at York on the Saturday after the Feast of Corpus Christi, the 11th of June. Once more she visited, before entering the convent, the grand old Minster which gives its chief glory to the finest city of northern England. At such a time as the octave after the great feast of the Blessed Sacrament, the coldness and the meagreness of the Anglican religion must strike a Catholic visitor to an old cathedral, with unusual force. The aisles of the Minster would seem to call for the solemn processions, and the vaulted roof to be willing to cry out, as the stones of Jerusalem, for the swelling echoes of the *Pange Lingua* and the *Lauda Sion.* Alas! the Tabernacle was not there with the adorable presence of the Incarnate God, the Holy Sacrifice was banished from the altar, the very name of the great festival was unknown. The humble and retired convent to which Frances was bound was the only spot in that once Catholic city where there was a Catholic altar, and where any honour at all was done to the mystery in which God has, as it were, summed up all His mighty works for the benefit of mankind. To a calm, strong heart,

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like that of Frances Ball, the thought of the neglected honour of her God would not be so much a cause of discouragement, as a spur to her holy resolution to give Him, during the whole of her life, the entire and pure devotion of her undivided love, and to labour in the vocation in which she recognised His special will for her, both to increase His glory in herself, and to advance it to the utmost of her power in others, and in the whole world around her.

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CHAPTER IV.

Seven Years at York.

THE new postulant, who had entered the convent at York, after so much delay and trial, was a source of the greatest satisfaction to the community from the first moment of her arrival. The bright girl of fourteen whom they had parted with six years before, with so much regret, was now grown into a quiet, graceful young woman of twenty, and it was evident that all that was good and beautiful in her character had ripened and grown into full bloom in the interval, while she was as innocent, and pure, and guileless, as when she left school. Her vocation had grown silently and surely, and her whole character was knit together and strengthened by the long cherished resolution which she had now found herself free to execute. Her path was already marked out for her by obedience, and the years of her probation at York were to prepare her for duties and responsibilities of the highest grade.

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All this was enough to render Frances Ball a full-grown woman in mind and heart, at an age when many not younger than herself would have been little more than children.

The confidence of the Superiors at York was shown by the fact that Frances was allowed to proceed to her clothing somewhat sooner than was usual. She was clothed on the beautiful Feast of Our Lady's Nativity, Sept. 8th. She took the name of Mary Teresa, by which she was always afterwards known. She was especially blessed in her novice-mistress, who was a religious of singular virtue and purity. She was a Miss Chalmers, who had been sent to the school at the Bar at the early age of five. Since that time, the only interval which she had spent outside the convent was the space of six months, during which she had remained with her friends, after finishing her education and before beginning her noviceship. Such a life reminds us of the old Benedictine saints, of so many of whom it is said that they never knew the world rather than that they left it. The fact that she had spent her whole life, practically, within the convent walls did not make Mother Mary Austin less sagacious in the discernment of character, less energetic in subjecting her novices to

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the trials of obedience and humiliation which their characters and the work for which they were destined required. Hers was a soul of marvellous innocence, and she is believed never to have stained her baptismal robe by serious sin. She was herself a great observer of the rules, and insisted on their accurate observance on the part of others. She was particularly devoted to the maintenance of the rule of silence.

The clothing of postulants, which is in many convents an occasion of public observance and festivity, was conducted in York in strict privacy, not even the young lady boarders in the school being admitted as witnesses. Frances had seen no such ceremony till her own turn came for its performance. In the same spirit of secrecy the novices, when once clothed, wore the same habit with the professed, and even the black veil. Mary Teresa was at once remarkable, even in that holy community, for the perfection of her religious virtues; her spirit of faith, her deep reverence for holy things and holy actions, her fervour in hearing Mass and reciting Office, her devotion to the Blessed Sacrament and to the Mother of God, were at once exemplary. Long after she had left York, and when the time came

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for collecting what could be gathered of memorials of her life there from those who had witnessed it, one of the old religious put on record her own remembrances as follows: 'Her life was quite supernatural, her very appearance breathed holiness; and, in her, every action, little and great, was blended beautifully into one great grand harmony, which was the sole end of her life—the greater glory of her Lord God.'

Mary Teresa was a great deal occupied, during her noviceship, in the ordinary work of the school. She spent her time of recreation on alternate weeks with the children in the house, and during the other weeks she was set to wait on the nuns at table. Her gentleness made her much beloved by the children. As she was intended—though none but her Superiors knew it—to be the foundation-stone of a new edifice of the Institute, it appears to have been the wish of those who governed her to try her in every possible way. She was strongly drawn to prayer and recollection, but she was nevertheless exercised in a multitude of external occupations, which would have been enough to distract a less fervent soul. Her companions, we are told, used to marvel at the manner in which Mary Teresa accomplished so many and so various duties

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without losing her recollection or her spirit of peace. No trial was spared her. Although her frame and constitution were delicate rather than strong, she was set to the hard work of the house as well as to the intellectual exertion required for the practice of teaching the classes. It was in her novitiate also that she learned the perfection of a virtue which always characterised her through life, as Dr. Murray bore witness—the virtue of obedience, which no one who has to govern can afford to be without in its highest degree.

Such are the few details which remain to us concerning the two years of the noviceship of Mary Teresa. She was professed on the 9th of September, 1816. We have seen that the Superior of York, in her letter to Dr. Murray, had stipulated that five years was to be the shortest time during which the preparation of the new foundress was to be continued. It turned out that she was to wait more than this appointed number of years. But this was anything rather than a disappointment to her. The delay was occasioned chiefly by the difficulty of finding the companions whom she required for the beginning of such a work. But instead of counting the days which were to pass before she was to

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leave York, this strong soul was growing more and more internally adverse to the task which was before her. After her profession, she appears to have passed through a time of interior trial, such as is so often to be met with in the lives of the servants of God. Mary Teresa had tasted the sweets of prayer and of continued union with God during the time of her noviceship, and she had become very fearful of anything that might interfere with the happiness she so deeply valued. She looked upon her work in Ireland as an enterprise of doubtful hope and certain distraction. It is said that she never mentioned it but once all the time that she lived at the convent at the Bar. But besides this apprehension, she was at this time tried by dryness and hardness in prayer and in all her communications with God. Her soul was in darkness and affliction. We have no description of her interior trials from herself at this time, but we have some letters of Dr. Murray, written with the obvious intention of comforting her, and from those it may be gathered how she had complained to him. The first of these letters is dated from Dublin, the 20th of October, 1820. After assuring her that her reminder to him was not needed in order to make him pray for her, the Archbishop goes on :—

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'The interest which I feel for your happiness would hardly allow me to be forgetful in this respect. And if it should, the thought which is in my heart, of the work in which God may, at some future time, employ you for His own glory, would recall my attention. When or how, or whether at all, this good work is to be established, are secrets which as yet God has reserved to Himself. But I most fervently pray that, if it be His holy Will to bestow on us that favour, it may be in the manner most conducive to His glory, and to the sanctification of all those who shall be engaged in it. All I have to require of you in the meantime is to be patient, quiet, to desire that God's Will may, in its minutest detail, be accomplished in you, and to pray that He may not allow you to fall into so much misery as to give the slightest opposition to His designs in your regard.

'I cannot admit the accuracy of your calculations respecting your greater prospect of future happiness in your present state, compared to what your situation here would afford. Wherever we are, we cannot command the grace of final perseverance—it is the free gift of God—and the surest way to obtain it from Him is to lend ourselves generously to the accomplishment of His

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most holy Will, utterly indifferent to the manner in which He may think proper to employ us for that purpose.

'Allow me now to remark—what, beyond all doubt, must be deeply impressed on your heart already—that a religious can look to no more certain way of knowing the Will of God in her regard, than the decision of those Superiors whom He has directed her to obey. Wherever, therefore, He has through their agency placed her, there she is the safest. Were she anywhere else, she would be out of the order which He appointed; her dangers might appear less, her safety in reality would be far from being assured. It would be easy to press this argument so as to force conviction—to merely hint at it must be enough for you.

'Let me entreat you, then, my dear child, not to continue wearing out your poor mind by anxieties which have no foundation, and part of which I cannot but attribute to the suggestions of the crafty enemy, who can sometimes assume the appearance of an angel of light, in order to tempt with more efficacy.

'You may never be called on to quit your present happy retreat. If you be, we are to hope that it will be under the direction of God,

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in Whose Hands you will be equally safe wherever you are, so long as you seek only to do His Will. It may, however, be a comfort to you to know, that in the event of your coming here, I have reason to expect that you will be in the company and under the guidance of some of those seniors whose presence you say would render your happiness complete. Go on, therefore, and serve your dear Lord with love and confidence in the best way you can, and with calm submission leave your future destination to Him.

'I was quite unprepared to expect what you mention of your difficulty in abiding punctually by Rev. Mother's directions with respect to fasting and abstinence. Your promise of entire docility for the future disarms me, and saves you from the scolding which I cannot but acknowledge you deserve. I hope you will be now in earnest really what you promise. If my enjoining it to you anew be of any use, I do it most earnestly.

'I am quite comforted by the account which you give of your dear sisters; they, too, have a great part in my little devotions, and I trust that I am remembered in return.'

We gather from these lines of the Archbishop

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that he entertained at this time some hopes that the foundation in Ireland might still be undertaken by the community at York. In this, however, he was to be disappointed. Before proceeding to the actual story of the foundation, we may subjoin some more extracts from other letters from the same enlightened guide, which may help to shed further light on the state of the soul of Mary Teresa at this time. Just after Christmas of the same year, Dr. Murray writes in answer, as it seems, to some complaints of the external employments which she found so distracting—

'Your preparation for Christmas night was not, in my opinion, the less acceptable to your dear Lord, on account of the time which you were obliged to subtract from your usual devotions, in order to prepare in the hearts of others a fit sanctuary to receive Him. What better preparation could you make? Every word which you employed to inspire them with fervour must have added a spark to your own flame. At least, it must have drawn on you a new grace from God which, though it may have stolen silently into the soul, was as powerful in fitting you to receive a more abundant share of the treasures of Holy Communion. You seem to forget how

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generous God is to those who devote themselves to make others serve Him. How, my dear child, could you call this a cross, particularly when it was appointed for you in the ordinary way of duty by those who hold the place of God in your regard, to direct you in the performance of His will? Do have more reliance on His goodness that He will not allow the obedience which He requires of you to be a snare for your salvation, but that He will rather employ it to conduct you with more certainty to final union with Himself. It may break in upon your contemplations, but your God, Whose call, by the voice of your superiors, you obey, will know how to reward you with richer blessings than your contemplations could procure. It may expose you to distraction, but your God is not unmindful of your weakness, and His grace will be ready to sanctify every effort which you make to recall your wandering thoughts to Him. It may impose a greater burden on you, but the Omnipotent will be near to support you. If, distrusting yourself, you look up with unbounded confidence to Him, He will surely never let you sink under a weight to which you submit solely for His greater glory. Need I add, that the greatness of the burden will not be forgotten when the hour of recom-

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pense shall arrive, and that they who instruct many to justice shall shine as stars to all eternity? When you speak of the time which you spend in school, as if each moment sent before you new fuel for purgatory, will you be vexed with me if I say that this is at least as bad as the apprehension of the other dear child, who will not unseal her lips at the hour of necessary recreation, lest she should commit a sin? Do you not discover in this the stratagem of the tempter who wished to disgust you with one of the essential duties of your state? I will make no apology for all this sermonising, as you know it proceeds from real solicitude for your happiness. Say for me to the dear novices everything that is full of regard. Remind them, also, in my name, of the injunction which I laid on them, and which I now renew, to have recourse with unbounded confidence to dear Mother Mary Austin for spiritual advice, and to be assured that if they follow her instructions they will advance in safety in the way of perfection.

'Anna Maria has had a most consoling letter from your dear Sister Regis, who has undertaken her new office of Superior with becoming awe, but, at the same time, with the most edify-

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ing resignation. She solicits, of course, all the prayers that can be procured for her.'[1]

The dates of both these letters show that the time which had been named as the least that could be enough for the formation of Mary Teresa for the work for which Dr. Murray designed her, had already passed. As yet, however, there was no immediate prospect of the accomplishment of the plan of the Archbishop. A design like that of the introduction of a teaching Order into Ireland for the education of the higher classes, was sure to meet with unusual difficulties. The very reason for the conception of such a plan lay in the existing dearth of higher education among ladies of the more affluent classes, and this dearth was certain to show itself in the comparative difficulty of finding subjects to begin the enterprise. Moreover, the work of the introduction of the Institute of Our Blessed Lady into a new country could not hope to be exempt from the Providential law, as we may almost venture to call it, by which it appears as if the foundation of all such works was to be laid in tears and at the cost of some valuable lives.

[1] This refers to the appointment of the eldest sister, Cecelia Ball, in religion, Sister Francis Regis, to the office of Superior at Cork. She displayed very great qualities in her new office.

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Thus we find that the first member of the convent at York, who was disposed to join Frances Ball in the work of which we are speaking, was cut off by death before she could complete her sacrifice. This was Sister Mary Gonzaga O'Reilly, a young lady who had entered the novitiate at the Bar before Frances Ball herself. She was in every way fitted for the work, but her life was to end before it could be begun. She died in July, 1816, before Mary Teresa took her vows as professed. After this loss there was a long interval before anyone could be found to associate herself in Mary Teresa's design. She may well have thought that she might look forward to remaining at her beloved home at the Bar. The next recruit was Miss Bridget Sheridan, daughter of the well-known physician, a lady of much cultivation and piety. Dr. Murray, however, found a difficulty in the fact that she had no fortune—not even the small amount which is necessary for the entrance into a religious order. This difficulty was soon come over by the generosity of Mary Teresa, who gave a part of her own fortune as a dowry for Miss Sheridan. The young lady proceeded to York and was professed, but she, too, had to hear the call of death before the time came for the

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foundation to be made. She must have been one of the 'dear novices' mentioned in the letter of Dr. Murray, lately quoted. Perhaps she was the one who was afraid to open her mouth at recreation for fear of offending in speech. But she died of consumption in the June of 1821, having taken in religion the name of Mary Austin, so dear to the Irish novices on account of the mistress who was training them.

In August and September, 1819, Mary Teresa had been joined at York by two more postulants who were to be her first companions in the foundation in Ireland. These two ladies were Miss Anne Therry, a niece of Edmund Burke, and Eleanor Arthur, the daughter of a gentleman in the county Limerick, who had suffered terribly in the persecution occasioned by the rebellion of 1798. They were a few years younger than Mary Teresa, and were fitted in every way to become with her the first stones of the new spiritual edifice. We shall hear more of them presently. Eleanor Arthur became Sister Mary Ignatia, and Anne Therry Sister Mary Baptist. Dr. Murray did not wish to wait till their novitiate should be completed before the beginning of the work in Ireland. It was under these circumstances of comparative hopefulness that the

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following letter was written by him to Mary Teresa :—

'*Dublin, May* 8, 1821.

'It gives me real pleasure, my dearest child, that you see as I do, in the matters which you have stated to me, the secret workings of Providence preparing the way for the accomplishment of its own work. Why, then, my dearest child, do you not leave everything with entire confidence to the gracious disposal of this unerring Guide? Why do you allow so many groundless terrors to prey upon you, as if your most loving Parent were not watching you, or as if He were unable or unwilling to protect you? Do place all your concerns with unbounded confidence under the care of His ever watchful, ever boundless Providence, and the more entirely will you rest upon His fatherly protection; banishing all solicitude about the manner in which He may think proper to dispose of you, the more certain may you be that He will not allow you to go astray. . . . As this whole business seems to be the work of Providence, your courage should now rise instead of sink, for, weak as the little shoot is which He is going to plant, when watered by the graces and blessings of our good God, it will not fail to spring up and flourish. . . .'

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The time was now come for Mary Teresa to make her final preparations for leaving the happy religious home where she had learned, for the seven happiest years of her life, to serve God in the constant pursuit of religious perfection. The actual call to such a sacrifice often brings with it the energy and fervour which may have been wanting when the prospect was as yet distant. God does not give His graces before they are wanted, and the anticipations of labours for Him are constantly entertained under a cloud of discouragement and pusillanimity, which vanishes when the occasion for positive trial arrives. Energy and fervour were never wanting to the strong soul of Mary Teresa, but her feelings of dislike to the position she was to be called on to fill did not change in a moment. She is said to have spoken afterwards as if at this time she would rather have been sent to Russia, than undertake the mission for which she was destined in her own country. But all this had to be overcome. She set about quietly copying all the valuable papers belonging to the community at York, which were to serve her in the establishment and government of a new community on the same principles and under the same rules. These still exist in her handwriting, although the

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printing of the Rules and Constitutions at a later date made her labour superfluous.

The immediate cause for the summons now addressed by Dr. Murray to his small flock of spiritual daughters at the convent at the Bar, seems to have been the purchase of the house which was to become the cradle of the new Institute in Ireland, Rathfarnham House, near Dublin. It was four miles from the city, and in a beautiful situation. But it would, of course, require considerable alterations and adaptations before it could become a fit home for the work which was to be carried on within its walls, and for this purpose it was essential that Mary Teresa should be on or near the spot. Dr. Murray, therefore, decided that she should at once come to Ireland, although she was the only one of the future religious of Rathfarnham who had taken her final vows. Dr. Troy had obtained leave from the Holy See that the first eight religious of the new Institute should be permitted to make their profession after a noviceship of a single year, instead of the two years which were generally requisite in the Institute of the Blessed Virgin. But even with this allowance, Mary Teresa's two companions were not as yet far enough advanced in their religious course to make their vows before

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leaving the Bar. The parting from their first religious house, always a moment of tender pain to fervent religious, and to them, perhaps, on many accounts, more painful than is usual, on account of the uncertainty and apparent hazard which beset their new undertaking, took place on August 10th, the Feast of St. Lawrence, 1821. They must have travelled fast for those days, for we find that they reached the port of Dunleary—now Kingstown—on the 12th of the same month. It was the same day on which George IV. landed on the same spot in his visit to his Irish dominions. Mary Teresa had found two vessels waiting at Liverpool to make the voyage, and without apparent reason refused to embark in the one of the two which was nearest the shore. The vessel she chose reached its destination in perfect safety, but that which she had declined was wrecked on the voyage. Dr. Murray had given her the choice between three alternatives as to the temporary lodging for herself and her companions. They might come to be inmates of his own house for a time, they might take a hired lodging for themselves, or they might accept the proffered hospitality of the good nuns who were beginning the work of the Sisters of Charity in Stanhope-street, under the direction of Mrs. Aiken-

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head. The choice could not be doubtful to those who were fresh from a religious house, in which, moreover, Mother Mary Augustine and her companions had themselves been novices. Here, then, for the space of a few months, the first religious of the Institute of Mary in Ireland found a home, under the same roof with the first members of the Irish Sisters of Charity.

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CHAPTER V.

Beginnings at Rathfarnham.

IT has already been said that the reason for the prompt summons from Dr. Murray, which had brought Mary Teresa and her two companions to Dublin before the time at which the latter could make their vows, was that the Archbishop had purchased for the new Institute the house near Dublin, which was to be its cradle and its most famous home. Those who now visit the stately and even grand pile of buildings, with which the name of Mary Teresa Ball is for ever associated, can have but little idea of what the house was when the three religious who were to be its inhabitants landed on the shores of Dublin Bay. It was a large, red brick house, very like many others in the neighbourhood of large cities like Dublin, so large that it might have served for the purpose of a good country-house anywhere in the three kingdoms, but without having any corresponding amount of land attached to it. It was in the style of the day, with a certain pre-

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tension to classicality about it, at least if the statues of heathen gods and goddesses, and other like adornments, could make it classical. The reception-rooms were on a scale of grandeur which did not reign throughout the rest of the mansion. Much costly material had been used in the building, but it was on the whole neither very comfortable nor very splendid. Its present appearance bears witness to the taste for Gothic architecture which Mary Teresa had brought back with her from York. Unlike other buildings in the same style, or which, like it, have been enlarged by Gothic additions, it will not be found by a visitor of the present day to be devoid of convenience and roominess, as is sometimes the case in Gothic buildings of whatever period or date. Its style might be more pure if it were now built by a professional craftsman, after the models of which Mary Teresa was so fond; but it may be doubted if it would be better adapted to its purpose.

While the alterations were being made, the religious of the new Institute of Mary were to live elsewhere. For eight months they remained the happy and welcome guests of the Sisters of Charity at Stanhope-street. On the 5th of May, in the year after their arrival in Ireland (1822),

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they migrated to Harold's-Cross, in the suburbs of Dublin, for the sake of beginning, in some sort of way at least, the work of education to which their lives were to be devoted. The house which they were able to obtain at Harold's-Cross was so small that no more than a dozen pupils could be admitted as boarders. This went on till the November following, on the 4th of which month they removed to Rathfarnham, which was not, however, by any means in a state fit for their work in comfort. For many months the work had to be carried on, not only with the difficulties to contend with inseparable from every beginning, in which the labourers were so few and so young, and the world around so ready with its opposition and its criticism, but also with all the additional discomfort which must reign in a house in which religious are compelled to sacrifice their own privacy, and the quiet of the life which is their best external support, on account of the presence and intrusion of the workers and others necessary for the completion of new buildings and new adaptations. It was not till the 8th of September of the following year, 1823, that the little chapel was finished, to the intense joy of the small community, and dedicated to the honour of the Nativity of our Blessed Lady.

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Before this time, however, they had had their first great consolation in the reception of two novices to assist them in their arduous undertaking. There are few joys equal to that of a small body of hard-worked religious on the arrival at their doors of souls like themselves, desirous of sharing in their hard work; and this joy is all the more intense, in proportion to the seeming hopelessness of the enterprise and the discouragements from without which it may chance to meet with. A score of novices are not so welcome to a well-furnished Institute as one or two to a community insignificant or despised; nor among the crowns to be won in religious orders are there any brighter than those which are assigned to the few first recruits to a great work in the days of its infancy and obscurity. Many years were to pass before the work at Rathfarnham, or as it must now be called, Loretto, was to be securely established; but the first promise of future success was given early in the time of struggle, when two novices appeared in the first year of the residence at the new convent. Mary Teresa and her two companions had not passed three weeks in the new house before Miss Margaret Corballis entered the Institute. She was clothed in the religious habit on the following Feast of the Puri-

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fication, Feb. 2, 1823, and professed as Sister Mary Catharine on February 5th, 1824. Before the ceremony of her clothing, she had been joined by another postulant, Miss Eliza Blake. She had known Mary Teresa at York, where she had been sent as a pupil during the years which the future foundress had passed in expectation of the call to her work in her native land. There Eliza had formed a strong attachment to the calm and bright young nun, and on her return from school she lost no time in making the necessary arrangements to join her in her work. She became Sister Mary Bernard, and took the habit in June, 1823.

We shall speak a little more fully presently of these new workers at Rathfarnham, as well as of four other postulants who joined the convent before the end of the year 1825. The early years of any such Institute are usually the most critical, and it is natural to dwell at some length on the characters of those who were the labourers of the morning hours. It could not be expected that the opening of the first convent of a new order for the education of ladies of the higher classes would pass without much opposition from various quarters. In the first place, there were secular schools for young ladies, the proprietors and sup-

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porters of which naturally took alarm at an interference which seemed to threaten their own monopoly. It has always been found, in the long run, that educational establishments among Catholics are most trusted, as well as most successful, when they are conducted by religious, who make it their duty in life to carry on this part, as it may be called, of the great work of the Christian apostolate. Hence we find that opposition of the kind with which the new convent of Loretto was met, is a feature invariably repeated in the history of such enterprises. The common cry that religious persons cannot educate so as to meet the exigencies of the age, or the requirements of the secular position to which the greater number of the young of both sexes must naturally be destined, was not wanting in the case of Mary Teresa and her few companions. Then, moreover, they were so few. The work of a considerable school cannot be conducted satisfactorily without the aid of a large staff. In the case of Loretto, the insufficiency of the Sisters themselves was supplied for the time by the services of the best masters whom Dublin could afford.

We have already mentioned the difficulties which beset the practice of the usual exercises of religious life, on account of the want of quiet and

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of the full observance of the cloister rule, while there were a number of workmen still employed on the building and interior arrangements. Then sickness was not wanting. The little chapel, of which mention has already been made, opened on the infirmary; and this happy arrangement was not without its practical use in the early years of Loretto. The nuns were overworked, and the building was not as yet complete. 'The shadow of the saving cross,' writes the good religious, from whom we shall presently borrow more largely, 'hung over Loretto for many a year. Sickness and anxiety were often within its walls, but the brave hearts of its inmates worked and toiled on in their Master's vineyard, patiently waiting for the vintage time. The very elements conspired their ruin, and often exerted their wild fury against the cloisters of Mary. On one occasion a violent storm shattered all the windows, and some of the fine old trees were torn up like seedlings, until, as our Sisters piously believed, through the intercession of our protecting Archangel, St. Michael, there came a great calm.'

One of the great devotions which the nuns of the Bar at York inherit from their first foundresses is the honour, in a very special degree, of the

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blessed Archangel, St. Michael. Indeed, the house at York was once saved in a miraculous manner from a raging mob of Protestant bigots, bent on its entire destruction, by the presentation at the door of the convent of a picture of St. Michael. It is delightful to trace in the customs and devotions of the Irish branch of the Institute of Mary, the traditional thoughts and spirit of the earlier houses of the same order. The new convent had not so many years of persecution and obscurity to pass through as the English house; but it had to found itself and ensure its success by the same experience of struggle and trial. At such a time it is natural that almost everything should have seemed to depend on the firmness and courage of the foundress. It was now that the long years of waiting at York bore their fruit; the progress was always slow, but it was steady and sure. It was in accordance with the genuine spirit of the beginners of the Institute of Our Blessed Lady, in the seventeenth century, that an attempt should at once be made for the benefit of a poorer class of children than those for whom the boarding-school at Rathfarnham was destined. A few months only passed, after the nuns had taken possession of the house, when an out-building was opened as a school for the

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poor. It was soon filled by a hundred children, the greater portion of whose numbers were afterwards doubled, then provided with dinner, at first once a week, and afterwards daily. The school was placed under the patronage of St. John Francis Regis, whose feast was always kept with due honour. The present spacious and beautiful school was built at a much later date. The zeal of the first Sisters of Loretto for the children of the poor did not fail to provoke the rivalry of neighbouring Protestants. Ireland is unfortunately the one country of Europe in which the practice of the purchase of the souls of Catholic children, by means of bribes to their parents, in the shape of alms from wealthy enemies of their faith, has been carried almost to the perfection of a fine art. These arts were at once employed in a school opened for the purpose in the immediate neighbourhood of Rathfarnham; but after a partial success, the attempt met with the fate which it deserved.

Those who are acquainted with the abundant consolations with which God is wont to recompense the labours of his devoted servants, under circumstances of difficulty such as those of which we have been speaking, will not be surprised to be told that, when these years of early struggles

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came to be made the subjects of retrospect by Mary Teresa and her associates, they appeared to be a time of unmixed happiness and almost rapturous delight. The events which stood out in prominence from the period of which we speak were few indeed. It was one almost uniform strain of hard work and continual exertion; but underneath the surface of that life of toil there lay an unbroken peace, constant union with God, the daily and hourly exercise of the virtues embodied in the religious vows at the outset, and the happy play of the charity and mutual confidence in which they were knit together as one soul and heart in their holy occupations. It seemed as if nothing could come to darken their interior peace and dull their joy, unless it were to be that separation of loving hearts by the Providential dispensations of health and sickness, life and death, from which no earthly family or community can long hope to be exempt. Mary Teresa had, as it were, paid the toll for beginning a great work for God when even at York; before the work was itself more than designed she had had to mourn over the early grave of her tried first companions. But the toll was to be exacted at Rathfarnham itself, before many years had elapsed from the entrances of the religious on

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their new home. The chosen victim was Mother Baptist Therry, the first of the two ultimate companions who had joined Mary Teresa at York, and who sickened and died in February, 1827. She had been entrusted with the care of the slender band of novices which was gradually forming itself at Rathfarnham, and her loss was most keenly felt by Mary Teresa. On her deathbed this exemplary religious is said to have predicted that there would not be another death in the community for eight years, as was really the case; and that in the year of that next death ten postulants would offer themselves to the community. This also was fulfilled. We shall speak in the next chapter of the virtues of this religious, as well as of others of the first community at Rathfarnham.

The domestic chronicler, so to speak, of whose labours any biographer of Mary Teresa must so gladly avail himself, concludes this part of her work by a commemoration of the principal benefactors and helpers of the community in these days of its infancy. Those who help a rising and struggling convent, like that of which we are writing, certainly deserve far greater gratitude than the benefactors of a later and more flourishing period. Most of these helpers of Loretto in

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its early time have long since passed to their reward. First and foremost, of course, must be placed the venerable name of Dr. Murray himself. He was always the Father of Loretto, but never more so than when it was a weakly plant. His presents were numerous; but he gave himself and his own services ungrudgingly. He even acted as chaplain for the daily Mass until another could be procured. Other names are to be placed by the side of his in this catalogue of charity—that of Mrs. O'Brien, Mary Teresa's sister, who had poured into her young ears the precious maxim of serving God above everything when she was about to leave her, a bright and innocent child, in the convent-school at the Bar; Mr. and Mrs. Scully, the latter of whom actually helped the Sisters in their work in the schools; Mr. Corballis, who gave some of his own family to the Institute; and a number of others. The Fathers of the Society of Jesus, from the very first, took a deep interest in the undertaking, especially the famous Father Kenny, Father St. Leger, and Father Haly.

The first-named of these Fathers was undoubtedly one of the foremost of his time in the Catholic Church of Ireland. He was one of those pupils of the famous Dr. Betagh, whom that good

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man had prepared to be the first stones in the restored edifice of the Society of Jesus in Ireland, as soon as the Providence of God should bring about that long-desired act of reparation on the part of the Holy See. The story runs of him that, when a boy, he had been in a workshop and attended at the same time a night-school under Dr. Betagh. He had such a love for speaking and preaching, that he used to repeat the sermons which he heard on Sundays to his fellow-apprentices. One day the master found him doing this with a crowd of the workmen around him, and he immediately dismissed the unfortunate young orator. Dr. Betagh found out how it had been, and at once took a special interest in him. He was sent to Carlow, then to Stonyhurst, and in due course of time to Palermo, where he made his novitiate and his studies. When Dr. Betagh was failing in strength and years, he consoled his friends by telling them of the treasure he was preparing for Ireland in Father Kenny. Father Kenny assisted Dr. Murray in the government of the College of Maynooth at a very critical time of its existence, and left behind him most indelible feelings of veneration and gratitude, though his vice-presidency was of comparatively short duration. He was a principal agent in the foun-

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dation of the Society's College of Clongowes Wood. But we are not now engaged on the biography of this most distinguished servant of the Church, who died at the Gesu at Rome, in 1841. His tender interest in the good works initiated by his great friend, Dr. Murray, is evidenced by the many services which he rendered at various times to the Sisters of Charity, of whom he took charge in the absence of the Archbishop, as well as by the assistance which he was always ready to render to Mary Teresa and her companions at Rathfarnham.

The following two letters of Father Peter Kenny will speak for themselves as to his interest in the new community, and will also shed some light upon the state of things at the time at Rathfarnham, at which they were written. The first of these letters was addressed to Dr. Murray early in the year 1823:—

'My Lord—After some consideration, I have determined to take the liberty of submitting to your consideration the expediency of giving the following directions, which appear to me requisite in the present state of Loretto House. When I reflect that the entire charge of this very complicated and extensive establishment depends on the exertions of three very delicate ladies, I must

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view the preservation of their health as a duty of religion, which in actual circumstances becomes imperatively urgent. I would, therefore, recommend that Rev. Mother should be placed under obedience in everything that regards the care of her own person, as the quality of her food, the nourishment that may be required by the delicacy of her constitution, how far she ought to be allowed to attend the sick, how long and how often upon any occasion she ought to remain up after the usual hour of rest. How far she should undertake the discharge of school duties ought to be a jealous object of attention. It is my opinion that she should not consider either the schools or the sick as the immediate object of her office; but as the present state of the house may cause some share of these duties to be allotted to her, I should not leave the portion of labour to her choice. Between her great solicitude to discharge the numerous duties of her station in the best manner, and the many wants inseparable from a new establishment, I am convinced that her health cannot be in worse hands than her own. . . .

'2. I am, from my own observation merely, led to believe that each of these ladies, but particularly Rev. Mother, is a very unfit subject for

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fasting or abstinence. When to their delicacy of constitution, labour and solicitude are superadded, I cannot think that any of them is bound to observe either precept. I know the violence that this suggestion would offer to their desires. . . .

'3. I should hope that the abstinence practised on Fridays and eves of festivals by the Institute is limited as with us. . . . I rather think that now Wednesday is superadded to the original observances; if so, I should suspend this additional abstinence, together with all duties which suppose a formed community. These duties might, in my mind, without any injury to discipline, be suspended until there are in the house seven religious, exclusive of the novices. These practices being enjoined by the Constitutions is not a reason to enforce their observance, since even the Superior herself, for just reasons, could safely dispense with them in favour of individuals, and unquestionably the Archbishop has the faculty of suspending provisionally these and such like enactments, which presuppose a number of persons whose joint concurrence would render the practice quite convenient to each one.

'Each of these duties appears to a willing mind very light, but when the number and con-

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stant strain of them is considered, it will be found that they soon exhaust the mind and body. Believing this, I could not feel quite easy if I omitted to make this communication to your Grace, whose indulgence I crave for this intrusion. I was resolved to enclose it before I left town, but I trust that the delay will serve to prove that I have not made up my mind without due reflection.—I have the honour to be, my Lord,

'Your obliged and humble servant,

'PETER KENNY, S.J.'

In the June of the same year, 1823, Father Kenny wrote to Mary Teresa herself the following letter. It seems to have been written after some retreat or period of recollection:—

'I have not preserved a copy of the distribution of time; but, as well as I can recollect, the lecture in the evening is only for a quarter of an hour, including the preparation of the matter for the morning meditation; if so, I should prefer it to be left to each one, as I suppose the choice of preparation of meditation is left to each one. But if the meditation is read aloud, then also should the lecture, which is supposed to prepare us for it. You understand, that if the custom has been to make the medita-

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tion in common, I see no reason to interfere ; but if each one prepare her morning meditation apart from the rest, then the lecture is also made privately. In fact it is truly a lecture of eight or ten minutes to dispose the mind, for reading the matter of meditation will at least occupy five or seven minutes. . . . I did not mean to include the novices, who have not finished the two years' probation, in the distribution which I altered ; they require a special distribution, as well as special care. When the community is large enough to allow a separation in almost every duty from the other religious it ought to be done. At present it will be quite enough to give them the following additional duties, to which other religious should not now be obliged :—

'1. Half an hour's meditation in the afternoon daily.

'2. Half an hour every morning in reading Rodriguez. This is indispensably necessary for the novices, and they should know every treatise in the first and second parts as well as they know the Lord's Prayer, before they arrive at the end of their noviceship. The chapters of the third part, which treat of the general obligation of the vows of religion, should be equally well-known.

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'3. Another lecture in the "Lives of Saints," or a similar work, for half an hour in the afternoon, should also be prescribed to the novices.

'4. I am quite decided in the opinion that an exhortation or instruction four times a week from the mistress of novices is too often, even though she had no other office to fulfil, as should be the case if the community were formed. In actual circumstances it is more than rashness to attempt it. Twice a week at any time would be quite enough to give a new instruction, oftener would be injurious to you and useless to them. Half an hour is quite long enough for instruction, most certainly it ought never to be three quarters of an hour.

"I should suppose that the matter of the instruction is drawn from the Rules and Constitutions, and I should therefore propose an exercise for the other two days, on which this half-hour would be vacant. I would have the novices assembled in the same place where they had the instruction on the preceding day, and call on them, or rather on one or two of them, to repeat the substance of what they heard the day before. Believe me, the exercises, without giving new trouble or fatigue to the mistress, would serve them more than a new discourse.

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'The novices should make their meditation in common, whether the other religious do so or not, consequently the book should be selected for them; the evening half hour of prayer should be a repetition of the morning meditation. If the consideration on Sundays be enforced by the Constitutions, and that the novices have so much free time, I should not oppose the practice, but the other religious have so many duties to discharge for the scholars as not to be directed to observe it in the small number of the present community. I have no objection that the regulation concerning the black novices, who have made their vows, should be observed, when the full number of all the vowed religious would be seven or above that number, but at present no additional duty should be imposed on them. Those prescribed in the distribution for the religious who have made their vows are quite sufficient. I should, however, have them present when this instruction is given, twice a week, but not at the repetition. . . .

'I feel the difficulty of offering even an opinion on these matters when at a distance from the place and persons concerned. However, you must consider all that I have said as a mere private opinion, not to be adopted till the Arch-

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bishop approves the suggestion, to whom you ought to convey your own remarks on the matter, notwithstanding delicacy or fears in differing from me.

'Yours in Christ,

'PETER KENNY, S.J.'

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CHAPTER VI.

The First Sisters.

THE letters which have been inserted at the close of the preceding chapter are not only evidences of the tender interest which Father Kenny, and others like him, felt in the young community at Rathfarnham; they also show us something of the zeal with which the interior work of the formation of the novices and the observance of regular discipline was carried on. It is clear from these letters alone, if we had no other evidence of the fact, that Mary Teresa never spared herself, and that she was also more forward and eager in insisting on the full observance of the Rule of her Institute than, under the circumstances of the case, are altogether approved by so experienced a religious as Father Kenny. It may appear that there was a tendency in her character at this time, such as is often to be observed in young superiors, and sometimes in superiors who are not young—a desire to do everything herself, rather than leave it to others, and it is perhaps

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somewhat too abundant in her exhortations to the novices. If the indulgence of such a tendency is a defect or an imprudence, it is at least the defect or the imprudence of generous and eager souls. Mary Teresa seems to have had a natural aptitude for rule—an aptitude such as requires the exquisite refinement and discretion which great gifts of peace can alone supply to make it a perfect instrument in the service of God in a religious community. She was pointed out in every way as the mother of the new Institute. By the side even of her two earliest companions she was comparatively a religious of long experience, and the others who joined her afterwards found her in the full exercise of the authority of a foundress. She was to remain in the uninterrupted exercise of her office during her whole life, and it cannot be wondered at if she should have left a very definite stamp of her calm and strong character upon the religious Institute which owes to her so much.

We shall devote the present chapter to an account of the first eight ladies who gradually formed the rising community at Rathfarnham. They were the foundation-stones of the edifice of the Institute in Ireland, and their number is large enough, and yet not too large, to make a

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picture of their characters to a sufficient extent a reflection of the special virtues and graces by which the community is distinguished. Two of them, as has been said, came with Mary Teresa from York, their novitiate as yet unfinished. The other six joined her at Rathfarnham in the early years of the convent there. The account which is here given of them is taken, almost entirely, from the manuscript memoirs drawn up by their religious sisters after them. We begin with the first two companions of Mary Teresa—Sister Mary Ignatia Arthur, and Sister Mary Baptist Therry :—

The centre, the mainspring of all this zeal, devotion, and charity, was our venerated mother.

She ruled in love over the hearts of her children, and they confided in her, and obeyed her slightest wish. Of her two chosen companions, who shared with her the hardships and the joys known only in first beginnings we must now speak, and as they were principally formed to all the exercises of a religious life by our mother, their virtues naturally reflect on her.

Sister Mary Ignatia was the youngest daughter of Francis Arthur, of Limerick, who suffered imprisonment during the penal times on account of religion. After encountering much opposition, and renouncing many worldly advantages, she entered the novitiate at St. Mary's, York, 2nd September,

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1819, and was clothed with the religious habit, 8th May, 1820. The following August she accompanied our mother on the Irish foundation, and was professed during their stay at Stanhope-street, 15th October, 1821.

Pope Pius VII., at the request of the Most Rev. Dr. Troy, Archbishop of Dublin, dispensed the first eight members who joined the Institute in Ireland from the second year of probation. When speaking of her profession day, Sister Mary Ignatia declared that she did not expect to feel more joy on entering heaven than she then experienced. Nevertheless, the cross laid its mark upon her soul. Great scrupulosity was the ordeal destined to purify and sanctify her, and from our mother she ever experienced the kind sympathy and encouragement she so much needed.

A model of devotion and recollection, she inspired even seculars with a love for her holy state. Her ready charity made it a pleasure to ask her a simple question, though her love for silence was such that she never seemed to utter a superfluous word. Her characteristic virtue was humility; she ever placed herself in spirit below everyone in the house. No unkind word or act was ever known to escape her. Every moment of time was treasured as a talent given her by God to traffic with for eternity, therefore she was never seen unoccupied.

The last seven years of her life were spent in the quiet duties of librarian and sacristan. During this time she was a frequent invalid, and often suffered so intensely that her life seemed a protracted mar-

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tyrdom, yet was she never absent from any choir duty except when her sufferings were unusually acute. Of her it may be truly said, that 'her life was hidden with Christ in God.' She died on the 1st January, 1842.

Her companion, Sister Mary Baptist Therry, was clothed and professed with her, and, as we have before mentioned, accompanied Mother Mary Teresa to Ireland. Anne Therry was the eldest daughter of John Therry, county Cork. At the age of ten she lost her truly pious mother, and the care of her education was then committed to the nuns of the Ursuline Convent, Cork. During her school days she served as a model of every virtue to her young companions, and on her return home plainly showed that her thoughts were far above the scenes of gaiety and pleasure in which for a time it was her duty to mix.

At the age of three years she made the offering of her spotless life to heaven, and never abandoned the resolution she then formed of belonging wholly to God. In mature years, when she acquainted her confessor with her determination to embrace the religious state, he was quite prepared for the announcement.

Having heard of Dr. Murray's projected foundation in Dublin, she generously offered herself for the undertaking, and with the consent of her father, went to York, August, 1819. She was professed in Stanhope-street, 15th October, 1821. On that solemn occasion she was favoured with none of those spiritual consolations which are usually enjoyed, but

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began to suffer from a series of severe interior trials, which lasted three whole years. Serene and calm as she ever appeared, her superiors alone could tell the long agony of her patient soul, while for those years of mental suffering the cross pressed heavily upon her. As is generally the way, patient endurance at last brought its reward, and we know that in after days her usual salutation to a postulant was, "I have only to wish you a participation in the happiness I enjoy in religious life."

Speaking of this happiness, she said "that nothing could deprive her of the inward peace and content she felt, for this disposition being founded on God alone, no human event could disturb her."

Indeed, so little did sufferings of any kind affect her, that once, when a sister complained, she turned to her sweetly, and said: "I never feel happier than when I have some pain to endure, for I then feel that I bear, at least exteriorly, some little resemblance to our Crucified Lord, and what greater honour for a creature." Being tenderly attached to her family, she resolved to overcome what she considered would be an impediment to the high perfection to which she aspired. She, therefore, made it a point never to speak of her relatives, and in her correspondence with them limited herself to the strictest necessity. After once reading their letters, she invariably destroyed them.

Knowing that much intercourse in the parlour with relatives is incompatible with the true religious spirit, she carefully avoided any unnecessary or prolonged visits. In her last letter to her father, we

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find the following sentiments: 'Since I entered this holy state I have carefully avoided inquiring after family affairs, lest under a religious garb I should bear a heart divided from the purposes of my holy profession.' On receiving news of her only sister's death, her tranquillity was apparently undisturbed, and she showed the same fortitude on hearing of the death of her aunt, to whom she was strongly attached.

These victories over her natural affections were not, however, gained without many and hard sacrifices. Her love of solitude and retirement were only equalled by her generosity in relinquishing both at the call of obedience or charity; and the necessary intercourse with the parents of the children afforded no small occasion of merit to one who had a decided reluctance to appear before seculars.

During the first years of her religious life she suffered much from extreme sensitiveness. A word, or even a look of disapprobation, would often be the occasion of very severe conflicts. Perceiving how much of nature and self-love entered into this disposition, she determined to overcome this weakness, which she did so perfectly, that no event seemed to have power to disturb her. And so for the seven years that she lived with her religious sisters she was as 'a burning and shining light of sanctity.' Lowly in spirit, rejoicing in abjection, her sweet humility increased the lustre of her varied gifts. Her thoughtful mind was imbued with the spirit of wisdom, and the depths of human nature seemed clear to her penetrating eye.

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Mary Teresa fully appreciated the treasure she possessed in this soul sent her by God to assist her during her early labours, and with fullest confidence and most childlike submission did this holy religious repay her mother's esteem and love. In after years, Mary Teresa often exclaimed, when speaking of her lost and valued child: "I never saw a fault in her."

About a year before her happy death, she was appointed Mistress of Novices, continuing at the same time to give religious instruction to the children, and to superintend the Sacristy. Up to this Mary Teresa had herself instructed and trained the Novices and though she now appointed M. M. Baptist to that duty, still she reserved to herself the chief responsibility and watched over them as far as her increasing duties permitted, and above all guided and sustained the young Novice Mistress in her difficult task.

In the discharge of her duties as Novice Mistress, Mother M. Baptist was most strict in maintaining every point of religious discipline. Knowing that discouragement is the greatest bane both to happiness and to holiness, she frequently advised the novices to bear patiently with themselves, and if they fell nine times a day to rise the tenth time with humility, courage, and good-humour. To one who seemed disheartened with repeated failure, she said: "My child, do not lose patience, I expect that in twenty years to come you will find it quite easy. Thrice happy will you be if on your death-bed you can say your life has been one long, hard, even

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though unsuccessful, struggle against nature. Believe me, great desires for perfection often proceed more from a refined self-love than from a desire of pleasing God, which your impatience in this instance has fully proved. Say often with the Royal Prophet, 'It is good for me, O Lord, that Thou hast humbled me.'"

A novice, having to choose between two occupations, expressed a decided preference for one, upon which her holy mistress playfully said: "Then, I am sure, dear sister, that is precisely the one you will not select." Another, having recourse to her in affliction, she said: "I wish I could make you think with me that you should feel most grateful to Almighty God, for is He not mercifully doing for you what you had not the courage to do for yourself?"

In her own trials, hearing that prayers were offered for her comfort, she quickly said: "Let them be for patience, not for consolation."

One of the sisters, about to assume an office, asked Mother Mary Baptist's spiritual advice, and received the following instructions, which she carefully preserved:—

1st. Before you enter upon any office or duty, make an offering to Almighty God of all the crosses, difficulties, or inconveniences that you may meet with, and prepare yourself to be equally satisfied whether you succeed or not, provided you do your best, and that the will of God be accomplished.

2nd. Keep yourself disengaged, so as to be always ready at the voice of obedience to resign the office or duty you are employed in.

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3rd. Never speak unnecessarily of your occupations, particularly at recreation.

What she counselled others she faithfully practised, and was often heard to say: "If the glory of God be promoted, I am indifferent whether it be done by myself or another."

The close of this singularly holy life was now approaching. From early childhood her thoughts had been with God and holy things; what wonder then that the hand of the Heavenly Gardener transplanted this rich blossom to its home in paradise before the winter of life had touched it. During her annual retreat, she experienced the first attack of her last fatal illness. Judging that death could not be far distant, she hastened to the choir earlier than usual, a little before the morning meditation, and made an offering of her life to God with all sincerity, desiring to die when and how He pleased. Her only anxiety seemed to be about the sorrow her death would occasion her beloved Rev. Mother, whose cares she had so faithfully borne and lightened during the previous seven years. But even this thought could not disturb her unalterable tranquillity.

On the 21st November, 1826, her first novices, Mother Mary Xaveria M'Carthy and Mother Mary Gonzaga Corballis, pronounced their vows, and Mother M. Baptist's mission on earth seemed accomplished. After the ceremony she went to the infirmary, which she never again was able to leave, though she lingered till the following February. During these months of severe suffering, Mary

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Teresa watched over her dying child with more than maternal tenderness, and with feelings of veneration and deepest thanksgiving, witnessed her heroic patience and intimate union with God. When her end drew near, Mother Mary Baptist declared to those around that her present joy and happiness were owing to her having made death the daily subject of her meditations; then, turning to a younger sister who stood near she said: "Never forget that you came here, first to die to yourself, and then to die the death you now see me about to undergo." To another she said: "I was just wishing to see you." She then presented the sister with an emblem of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, and a small slip of paper on which was written: "Be affable to all, familiar with few, and flatter no one." "My present may appear trifling," she added, "but I assure you, if you make right use of it, it will contribute to your perfection. I have been seven years learning that extract of St. Bernard, which is, I think, engraven on my heart; therefore I can transfer the little copy to you, adding, 'be equable to all.' I advise you always to deposit your pains in the Sacred Heart before you communicate them to anyone. You may then seek consolation from superiors."

Her weakness increasing, it was considered time to administer the last sacraments, which she received with a calm and recollection not only edifying, but wonderful. In presence of all the assembled community, she asked pardon, in a loud and firm tone of voice, for the bad example she, in her humility,

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thought she had given. Shortly after, just as her last agony began, she exclaimed: "I expected to be resigned to die, but I never hoped to desire it as I do now. I rejoice to think that to-night I may see my God."

Towards three o'clock in the morning, perceiving the Rev. Mother still kneeling by her side, she earnestly begged of her to take some rest, but no entreaties could move the sorrowing mother to leave her child. Turning to her faithful watcher, Mother Mary Baptist said: "I feel that my dissolution approaches; in a few moments my lot for eternity will be decided, and still, though suffering is my portion, could I make worldlings taste the peace of my soul, they would gladly exchange all their earthly pleasures for my place on this bed of death." As she uttered the words: "Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, may I expire in your arms," this faithful religious slept in God on Friday, the 16th February, 1827, in the thirty-first year of her age."

We may now pass on to the postulants who joined the infant community at Rathfarnham itself.

The first postulant who offered herself was Margaret Corballis, second daughter of Richard Corballis, of Rosemount, Dundrum. She joined the community on the 21st November, 1822, and with the livery of Christ assumed the name of Mary Catherine on the 2nd February, 1823. She made her profession 5th February, 1824.

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In her the infant community gained a treasure; for her spirit of piety was united with that cheerfulness and sweetness of manner which drew many hearts to God; moreover, her brilliant talents found fitting and successful employment in the organisation of the schools. When the children under her charge were concerned, her zeal was indefatigable; she thought no labour too great to secure their welfare. Her manners were singularly attractive, and she exercised an influence over others which she made use of to direct their hearts to God.

Her devotion to Our Blessed Lady was remarkable; and her efforts were constant to inspire the pupils with love for their Immaculate Mother. Many were the little devices she used for that end, amongst others, she contrived never to let a recreation pass without saying something in her honour. Filled with zeal for God's glory, she left no means untried in order to promote it, often at the expense of rest and health. She was heard to say, that "zeal was her favourite virtue, and that there was nothing she would not do to draw even one soul to God." Her zeal for the good of the Institute was not less striking. On one occasion she declared that where the Institute was in question, she would not hesitate at any difficulty, and that nothing human could influence her to consent to what might be prejudicial to its interests.

Sister Mary Catherine's zeal for new foundations was equal to her desire for the spread of God's glory and the increase of the Institute. When the assembled community were informed of the intended

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filiation to Navan, this zealous religious was one of the first to offer herself generously to leave her loved home and its deeply cherished inmates, and face the trials and privations that everywhere attend beginnings.

Sister Mary Catherine's exertions to promote piety and a spirit of obedience amongst the pupils were equalled only by her efforts for their improvement in every branch of their literary education; and these exertions were generally crowned with success. As the glory of God was her first object, she always appeared to labour by preference for those children who were either dull, heedless, or thankless. One who had, during her school days, received many marks of kindness, afterwards made a most ungrateful return. On hearing this, Sister Mary Catherine replied, "How good is God, not to reward our labours in this life, but to reserve all for a blessed eternity!" Every consideration of self was joyfully sacrificed when the children were in question. She desired that all the mistresses should act alike in the school; and, though very vigilant, could never endure the appearance of severity or suspicion. At recreation no one manifested a sweeter or more gentle gaiety than our good sister; she delighted to enter into the most innocent amusements of the children, whilst a calm energy of character commanded their respect and submission.

Sister Mary Catherine showed also great skill in the management of household affairs, and she was thus charged with their superintendence at different periods; this superintendence included the charge of

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the lay sisters. Once on her reappointment, they expressed great joy, which displeased the humble sister, who quietly said: "If you laboured for God, you would be as glad to obey one sister as another." Often, when exhausted from labour and entreated to spare herself and rest a little, she would exclaim: "Ah! my dear, leave me, I shall not be long here; let me do a little for God while I can, I only regret I cannot do more." And when it was urged that she would injure herself by so much fatigue, she energetically replied: "What, sister, have you no zeal for God's glory and the salvation of souls?"

Thus she laboured on, and when the end was drawing near, anxious to benefit all around, she did her utmost to teach the novices and the younger members that even after her death she might be useful to her beloved Institute; and, when instructing them, she would say: "Do it so, that is the way Rev. Mother likes it to be done." Her parting instructions to a novice were: "Pray, pray well, and everything else will succeed. The perfection of our ordinary actions depends in a great measure on the way in which we perform our spiritual duties."

Though naturally of a warm temper, she succeeded in completely subduing it, and acquired that calm and gentle deportment for which she was remarkable. In the midst of her labours she was suffering most acutely, and the infirmarian, who witnessed her sleepless and painful nights, could hardly believe it possible for her to exert herself so much during the day, and to manifest through all so much patience and tranquillity. The ambition

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of this good religious seemed to be to die at her post, and, as far as possible, to attend to every point of regular observance, which she did till within three weeks of her death. Some months before, she was heard to exclaim: "Oh! it is now that I love my state." Before going for the last time to the infirmary, everything under her charge was left in perfect order. Her sufferings for some time must have been intense. The attending physician, Dr. O'Reilly, declared that, during twenty-five years' practice, he had never come across so distressing a case; and, he added, that the disease in her throat must have been extending for fifteen years at least before it reached to a state of ossification, which rendered all efforts for her cure useless. The most torturing remedies were applied, and she endured them not only with patience, but with seeming pleasure. When the infirmarian sympathised with her in her sufferings, she said: "Oh! I do not suffer half what I deserve. God saw I spared myself too much, so He is now mercifully supplying what I had not courage to do." When asked how she felt, her general answer was: "Very bad, thank God." She would frequently say: "Do all you can for God while you enjoy health, for very little can be done when ill. God does not require much, neither does He ask us to do great penance, but He demands the sacrifice of self. If it was the will of God, I should like to live another year to labour for the glory of God and repair my faults."

The thirst for doing good to others, which had

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consumed her during life, prompted her to speak words of advice and encouragement to the sisters who knelt around her dying bed. She often begged their pardon for her faults and bad example, and thanked them for the kindness and lenity they had always shown towards her. With fervent prayer she implored our Lord that if there was one stain unexpiated, she might remain still on earth to suffer more and so efface it. At times she would exclaim: "What have I ever done to merit such great happiness? Only you tell me I am dying, I should not believe it." Some one saying she was worse, she cried out in loving accents: "How can you say I am worse when I am nearer seeing my God." With great joy she made a fervent oblation of her life to God, distinctly answered all the prayers for the dying, and in wonderful peace breathed forth her happy soul at three o'clock, A.M., 29th December, 1835, in the 37th year of her age and the 13th of her religious profession. Her death caused sorrow to many a heart, but to none more than to Mary Teresa. God, as if to console her for the loss of one sent many to fill the vacant place; for during the ensuing year fourteen postulants received the habit, and twelve novices made their profession. Those who knew Sister M. Catherine's deep love for the Institute attributed this increase of members to her intercession with God.

Sister M. Bernard Blake, of Dartfield, county Galway, was the second postulant received by Mary Teresa. She was educated at St. Mary's, York, and while there became strongly attached to the

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future spiritual mother, with whom she was destined to be associated through life; she entered the noviciate 21st January, 1823. On the following 13th June she was clothed with our holy habit, and made her profession on the 20th August, 1824. The motto she then adopted was fully carried out through a long life of silence, recollection, and humility; and on her dying bed she might with truth repeat: "My life is hidden with Christ in God."

Her love of regular observance was very remarkable, and she had a horror of the least departure from it. Every event of life seemed to draw her more closely to God; reproof and public humiliations, trials of which she had more than a common share, she bore not only with meekness, but with joy. Her sweet, gentle charity was especially shown to the sick and the dying; to them she devoted whatever time she could spare from other duties, and took pleasure in performing for them even the most menial offices.

The general sorrow caused by the sad accident that brought Mary Teresa's life to a close had such an effect on Sister Mary Bernard, that her already failing health gave way under the pressure of her intense grief. Still she persevered faithfully and with heroic courage in all religious observances. To inquiries about her health she would playfully answer:—"The young may die, but the old must."

Rev. Mother, though herself suffering and weak, prepared her for her last moments, and Sister Mary Bernard received Extreme Unction early in Holy Week. Nevertheless, she struggled against weak-

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ness so far as to be present at some of the offices; but on the morning of Good Friday her stall was vacant. She received Holy Viaticum that day, after which, raising her eyes and hands to heaven, she remained some time in silent prayer, her countenance assuming a heavenly aspect, quite different from the expression of suffering it had previously borne. The hours of that day and night passed quickly, and on Easter Saturday morning Sister Mary Bernard gave up her soul to God, we trust to join in heaven in the strains of Holy Church, upon which for so many Easters her soul had lovingly lingered.

Through her illness as well as during life her spirit of mortification was conspicuous. Often when some little delicacy was offered to her, she would put it from her, saying, "life is not worth it." The night before her death she desired the Infirmarian to call her as usual next morning at five. The sister begged of her not to rise for Mass, but the dying religious, replied: "This body is for the worms, but my soul is my own, and the hearing of that Mass may save it." On Good Friday morning, when butter was brought to her she put it aside in order not to violate the strict abstinence prescribed by the Church on that sorrowful festival.

Eight days before a young sister had offered to relieve her of a duty that seemed beyond her failing strength. She refused assistance; and when the sister begged her at least to be seated, Sister Mary Bernard replied: "Stay, dear, during life I have never sought the easiest work, and I am not going to begin now."

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The next candidate was Miss Maria M'Carthy, daughter of Justin M'Carthy, Esq., of Cork. She was niece to the Right Rev. Florence M'Carthy, Coadjutor-Bishop of Cork, and sister to Mother Mary Borgia, one of the oldest and most esteemed members of the Ursuline Convent in that city.

Having seen and admired the young Frances Ball, during her visits to her sister Cecilia, who, as we have before said, was an Ursuline Nun in Cork, Miss M'Carthy felt drawn to join her in her noble undertaking, and accordingly entered Loretto Abbey, Rathfarnham, on the 19th August, 1823, and received the name of Mary Aloysia. The following 13th November, 1823, she was clothed, and made her profession 13th November, 1824.

For fifty-six years Mother Mary Aloysia continued to benefit the Institute by her wise counsels; for to a highly cultivated mind and talents of a superior order, she joined a mature judgment and enlightened views. She successively filled the offices of Mistress-General of the schools, Mistress of Novices, and Local Superioress, and was ever remarkable for a spirit of regularity and religious observance.

A severe trial, however, awaited this zealous religious. After about twenty-five years of labour, her career of active usefulness was restricted by an accident, from the effects of which she remained ever after lame. But though her sphere of labour was narrowed, she contrived in many ways to be of service to her religious sisters, and above all set them an example of exact fidelity to rule, and scrupulous fulfilment, as far as her circumstances would admit, of every religious observance.

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The 19th August, 1873, brought round her golden jubilee, which was celebrated with great joy and the religious festivities usual on such occasions. Many on that day gratefully joined in paying a loving tribute to her virtues.

The January of 1879 being unusually severe, told upon the health of the aged mother, who was now in her 96th year. She gradually sank, and as her last hour drew near, her intellect, which had been undimmed by age, seemed to grow even brighter. She turned all her energies to the one thought, of the best manner of performing the great act before her. During life a great dread of God's judgments had often caused her much suffering; but now that she was about to appear before that judgment-seat, peace and confidence seemed to take possession of her soul. Not wishing to lose the merit of a single moment of the time that was fast slipping from her, she desired to have an express leave for every act, even the moistening of her lips. It was touching, indeed, to see this venerable mother ask leave for the most trivial things from the Infirmarian; and if those around perceived any hesitation in her compliance with what they deemed necessary, they had but to say: "The Infirmarian wishes it," and the obedient religious at once complied. On the 12th February, 1879, she went, we trust, to receive the crown of eternal life from the God whom she had so long and so faithfully served.

The next on our list is Marianne Finn, the first convert lady received among the nuns of Loretto.

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She was the favourite child of a Protestant banker, and had been educated as a strict and even prejudiced Anglican. 'As a child,' she afterwards wrote, 'the inconsistencies of the Protestant catechism set me thinking. I found that the accusations from the Protestant pulpit were absolutely falsified by the conduct of my Catholic friends, and this was the happy foundation of all that arose afterwards.' These thoughts soon led to a change in her opinions: prejudice at last gave way to views of considerable liberality. About this time, Miss Finn had the good fortune to meet the Right Rev. Dr. Doyle, to whom she was introduced by Bishop Marum, at an evening party in Rutland-square. The brilliancy of the great Doctor's intellectual conversation attracted and won her attention, and the acquaintance gradually ripened into strong feelings of friendship. Every succeeding conversation drew her still closer to that Holy Church of which he was so bright an ornament, till at last his pleadings with her soul led her to embrace the one true faith. Not long after the young convert determined to renounce a happy home and many worldly advantages.

On the 6th June, 1824, she entered the novitiate, and assumed the name of Mary Paul. She was clothed with the holy habit on the 19th September of the same year, and in the following year, on the 29th September, made her profession.

For more than thirty years she laboured zealously as Superioress of the Convent of Navan, which under her government attained a high degree of prosperity.

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Her untiring energy was all the more remarkable as her life was one of great physical suffering, particularly for the two years preceding her death, which occurred on the 22nd March, 1865.

Anna Maria M'Carthy, sister to our dear Mother Mary Aloysia, entered among us on the 31st May, 1825, and on the following 29th September she received the religious habit. Sister Mary Xaveria was confided to the care of Mother Mary Baptist Therry, and the last duty performed by this lamented mother was to assist at Sister Mary Xaveria's profession, after which she went to the infirmary, where, till her happy death, she continued to instruct her first novice.

The loss of her good mistress was felt most keenly by Sister Mary Xaveria, but even at that early period of her religious life the holy novice displayed the generosity and strong virtue that ever characterized her. During the Requiem Mass her sweet and plaintive voice was distinctly heard above the others, and by no outward sign did she betray the sorrow she then felt. For a long time she could never name her lost friend, but thinking this a weakness and an imperfection, she overcame herself, so as to converse freely about her, and carried her spirit of sacrifice so far as to dispose of everything, even the last little bequest—a picture of the Sacred Heart—which was bestowed upon her by her lamented mistress. God, no doubt, rewarded this generosity by fresh supplies of grace, which enabled the young religious to make rapid progress in perfection, above all in the perfection of detachment.

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Her idea of the holiness required of religious was very great. She appeared at all times to be penetrated with a sense of the awful sanctity of God, and endeavoured to excite all around her to similar feelings. No wonder, then, that she was remarkable for a great spirit of recollection. Her recollection, however, was far removed from sadness; indeed, she was often heard to say that she "did not know how a religious could be sad."

As Head Mistress of the schools, Mother Mary Xaveria's duties were both laborious and successful. She had a wonderful talent for managing all under her care, and contrived to get through an unusual amount of work by her exact method, and her earnestness in the performance of each duty. Though she studiously sought to deprive herself of every little convenience, she was most attentive to the wants of others. Before calling the children in winter, she went earlier than usual to the dormitory in order to make the fire burn brightly before the children rose; and to encourage them to rise promptly used to say: "Oh, my dear children, how delightful to think that the first act of the day we offer to God is one of sacrifice." This true religious left no means untried to fill the children's minds with a tender devotion to the Sacred Heart, and great charity for the souls in purgatory, as well as with unbounded confidence in St. Joseph.

When instructing the younger Sisters about their duties, she was wont to say: "Never allow your exterior works to interfere with your spiritual duties. Act with a spirit of recollection, and go through

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your duties so quietly that when they are done no one may know who did them. Have a place for everything, and have all about your work so ordered as to be ready to leave everything at a moment's notice."

Love for her vocation increased with years. She never tired speaking of the happiness of religious, and the hundred-fold bestowed on them, but then she would add: "These blessings are for the faithful spouse." She dreaded, above all things, the account to be rendered of graces received and perhaps abused, and would often say: "The obligations of religious are greater than we can have any idea of. A religious and a saint ought to be synonymous terms."

Her zeal was no less remarkable than her other virtues, and when announcement was made of a day school to be opened in Dublin, she offered herself with joy for the good work. It was then she declared that she would willingly have waited ten years, in order to join a community of our Institute, and that if she had even to travel to the North Pole to attain her end, she would have counted herself happy.

On the foundation of Navan, Mother Mary Xaveria was sent there, and arranged everything with her usual tact and good management. Some mention of this first filiation from Loretto Abbey, Rathfarnham, will be found in its proper place.

Mother Mary Xaveria, while labouring in Navan and Harcourt-street, displayed the same fervour and zeal that rendered her such an example at home. Ever a most strict observer of our holy rules and

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customs, she used to say: "If there be any deviation from the Mother House, nothing can go right." Her greatest care was to preserve, as far as possible, a perfect similitude to it, and often repeated: "If we deviate from Rathfarnham, even in trifles, we shall soon lose the semblance of a filiation."

The success of her labours at Navan caused her to be recalled to assist in founding the day school at Harcourt-street. The delicate state of her health also rendered it advisable to have her near good medical advice. She soon became very seriously ill, and many fervent prayers were offered that her valuable life might be spared to establish the day school, which had been dedicated to St. Francis Xavier. The Rev. Mother then made a promise, in the hopes of prolonging the days of this zealous labourer, that if she lived to accomplish the work, the devotion of the ten Fridays in honour of the saint should be annually made. It pleased our Lord to hear the mother's prayers on behalf of her child: the petition was granted, and the devotions have ever since been performed. During Mother Mary Xaveria's ten months' superiority in Dublin, she rather carried out Mary Teresa's wishes than commanded the sisters, and in every possible manner she sought to spare her revered mother even the least pain or anxiety.

By long practice this mother had acquired the art of suffering without complaining, of bearing fatigue without seeming tired, of amusing herself without dissipation, and of mortifying herself without letting others see it.

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However, disease began to make rapid progress, and the Sisters saw with pain that the suffering, and languor of her wasting decline would soon deprive them of her presence. With much sorrow, Mary Teresa yielded at last to the sad conviction that another of her treasures was reclaimed by the Almighty Giver, and about to be summoned to her reward. To the holy religious herself this summons brought joy and gladness; already she could hear in spirit the words: 'Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away; for lo! the winter is past, and the rain is over and gone.' A holy violence was again offered to heaven, but no prayers could now detain her whose labours were over, and whose crown was won.

Through life she was filled with a dread of the awful account to be rendered at the judgment-seat of God. When her revered mistress, Mother Mary Baptist Therry, was about to appear before that tribunal, she told her of this dread, and received from her the consoling assurance, that "eight years hence the awful hour would find her soul in perfect peace." That hour was near, and with it came the verification of the promise. On the eighth anniversary of Mother Mary Baptist's death her first novice received the last sacraments, and with holy hope and joy, prepared for her final conflict. She could not bear to have her sufferings alluded to, saying they were not worthy to be called sufferings, and exclaiming: "Oh! that I could make everyone sensible of the comforts I have received and the joys I have experienced in religious life!"

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Mary Teresa, with her usual maternal anxiety, faithfully watched over the last hours of her suffering but happy child. Her presence was a wonderful solace to the poor invalid, who, on seeing her enter the infirmary would often say: "Oh! welcome Rev. Mother to your poor child; when you are near me I at once feel better." And as the mother spoke of heavenly things and raised the patient's mind above all here below, she would with loving ardour cry out, "Ah! Rev. Mother, when I get to heaven I will pray that all your desires may be realised." The only wish she expressed was to have the letters that Rev. Mother had written to her when in Navan and Dublin sent for, that once again her soul might find strength and comfort in their perusal. Being asked what gives most comfort at death, her reply was, "Obedience includes everything that makes this moment sweet." As if to reward even here her life of labours and sufferings, both of soul and body, an unspeakable delight and happiness seemed to surround her last hours. A joy, almost amounting to playfulness beamed upon her countenance, as she quietly settled for her rest on the night of the 4th March. In this tranquil state the succeeding hours passed, till 'the night was far spent and the day was at hand.' As the morning dawned she breathed forth her blessed soul into the hands of her Creator, the 5th March, 1835.

We now come to the last of those Mothers included in the privilege, granted by Pope Pius 7th to the first eight Members, of making only one year's novitiate.

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Elizabeth Corballis, called in religion Mary Gonzaga, was sister to Mary Catherine Corballis, and twin sister in religion with Mother Mary Xaveria M'Carthy. Of her, Rev. Mother was heard to say, as she was transcribing a short account of the life and virtues of her holy and most favoured child: "Who could do justice to her life?" During her school-days at St. Mary's, York, she first became acquainted with Rev. Mother, in whom the child seemed to see realised her ideal of all that was great and holy, and when later on she too felt the call to perfection, it was under that mother's guidance she desired to live, and in the vineyard with her to toil and die.

Elizabeth was not always the subdued and sanctified being of later years, her gentle meekness and holiness were the result of many a hard struggle. To an intelligent mind and peculiar sweetness of disposition were united very high spirits, and a great desire to promote the happiness of all around her. On leaving school she placed herself under the direction of Dr. Murray, her father's honoured friend. This holy prelate was not slow in discerning the true worth concealed beneath the gay and joyous exterior of this child of predilection, and he willingly consented to be her guide and father in the spiritual life. After a time she heard the divine call, inviting her to leave home and kindred and follow Christ her Lord. Many an interior struggle had she to undergo, before she could resolve on that death to self, which she knew religious life would require. At length she yielded, and through Dr.

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Murray's influence obtained her parents' leave to enter the convent. The Archbishop brought her himself to Rev. Mother saying: "Mary Teresa, take great care of this child, for she has cost me very dear." On the 20th June, 1825, Elizabeth entered the novitiate, and when leaving the world seemed like a bird let loose from its cage. Her spirits were exuberant —and, solid as was her well-known interior piety, it was evident that a work remained to be done, before the exterior would correspond to the beauty of the interior. One day the young postulant came in from a walk with her dress torn, and running up to Rev. Mother, said, by way of excuse: "I was running, my foot slipped, the dress caught in a tree and tore thus." With patient gentleness Rev. Mother smilingly replied: "Thanks be to God, my dear child, you will not find it so easy to tear the holy habit."

The day was near when this ardent soul was in good earnest to put her hand to the plough and cheerfully and perseveringly to labour at her perfection till the hour of her death. Never did novice more literally obey the words in the ritual for the clothing: 'Go, then, and willingly cast off both the spirit and the livery of the world, receive outwardly a habit which breathes only humility, and be inwardly clothed with the spirit of Jesus Christ Himself.' This command was most faithfully fulfilled during the peaceful months of her novitiate, and her profession was made with feelings of wonderful joy and generous oblation on the 21st Nov. 1826, the feast of the Presentation of our Blessed Lady.

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The first duty confided to the young novice was that of sacristan, and the duties of this office were lovingly fulfilled. As if to reward her lively faith, and gratify her intense love for Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, the office of Prefectress of the Church was uninterruptedly hers, though she was laden with many other occupations. Her bright, joyous spirit made every duty, every observance of religious life, a service of love, and kindness and charity reigned supreme in her life. Never, during the fourteen years of her religious life, was the fervour of her first sacrifice seen for a moment to grow cold, and the fire of her devotion to the Precious Blood of Jesus and to the Adorable Sacrament of the Altar was fanned by her continual prayer.

So well did she learn the lessons of religious life, that about four years after her profession she was appointed Mistress of Novices, and certainly a more striking model of perfection could scarcely have been put before the novices than that afforded by their new mistress. She tried to impress them, above all, with a great love for their rules, and most exact observance and recollection, urging them to perform each duty as if in Nazareth with Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, and often saying to them: "The secret of holiness is to know how to retire into one's own heart and dwell there with God alone. As religious our happiness should be to converse with our Spouse. Our only treasure is sanctity, let us seek it in the Sacred Heart of Jesus." One of her most frequent sayings was: "A religious will never regret, at the hour of death, having seen little, heard little, and spoken little."

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But great as was Mother Mary Gonzaga's desire of perfection, both in herself and others, it soon became evident that the novitiate was not the place destined by God for the manifestation of her virtues. The schools seemed to be the portion of the vineyard allotted to her care by the Father of the family; therefore, after she had shone as a model of religious observance before the novices for about a year and a half, she was removed from the office of Novice Mistress. The period of the annual retreat was fixed on for the change.

The evening recreation passed as usual with her novices, talking over the spiritual expectations of the next eight days; and, as the holy mistress was going to the choir, she received an order from Rev. Mother to take charge of the pupils during the retreat. Nothing took by surprise one who ever dwelt in God's holy presence, ready for the least intimation of His will; so with her usual sweet smile and gravely cheerful aspect, she proceeded to her new duty, which she took up as earnestly and naturally as the one she had just left. She who loved to be employed about spiritual things was now, from morning till night, amid the children. How her duties towards them were fulfilled will best be learned from the children's own words.

One of them declared, many years after her mistress had gone to her reward: "From the first day I saw Mother Mary Gonzaga I felt she was a saint, and I soon found that all my companions felt the same: there was something indescribable about her. Peace and holiness seemed to attend her footsteps. Later

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on, when I felt the desire to belong entirely to God, I used to think what I should do, and where I should go to become a great saint; and, as I thought, my childish cogitations always ended with, what sanctity can be greater than Mother Mary Gonzaga's; go where she is, and do what she does, and you will be a saint." Another declared that so firm was her belief in her mistress' holiness, that she laid herself out to watch her every act, in order, as she said, "to see how a saint went on." Many after leaving school returned to hear from their holy mistress those words of counsel which they so deeply prized. To one who consulted her on entering religion, she said: "Do not picture to yourself the religious life as one of ease and pleasure, but rather as one of self-denial and death to self. If you become a religious and do not die to self, you are one but in name; our very habit should remind us that we are dead to self, and should mourn for life over the Death and Passion of Jesus. If you become a nun you must be obedient, silent, hardworking, dead to all but the desire of pleasing God: but remember that this living death for which you are now preparing will result in a glorious life before the throne of God."

We cannot refrain from giving a few parting words addressed to one of her children before entering the noviceship: "My child," she said, "you will soon be under better guidance than mine, yet I would say a few words, to recommend to you the study of one virtue in particular during your future life. That virtue is silence! Silence accord-

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ing to the rule Silence in word, silence in action, silence in your interior. Each action, even the closing of a door, should be done in silence; when your duty will require you to speak, the words must be spoken in silence, that is, in a low voice, and your heart must be silent to enable you to hear the whisperings of the Holy Spirit." As she advised so she practised; even the most giddy children were impressed by her quiet and recollected manner. It would be impossible to find out what she liked or disliked. Though gifted with unusual talents, her modesty shone beyond all.

She was about to be placed in a position that would spread still further the light of her holy example. At the close of the annual retreat, 1834, as she knelt for Rev. Mother's blessing, the latter said: "My child, you are Assistant and Mistress of Schools." In this office she continued uninterruptedly till death. The diligence with which she had hitherto laboured in the school was redoubled, now that the entire weight of the responsibility rested with her. As we might expect, she excelled in imparting religious instructions and in giving practical advice to the children regarding their future life. She was very exact in examining pupils when they first came as to their religious knowledge, and put them herself through a private course of instructions. No hurry, no press of business, could make her omit what she considered a most essential duty. Her fervour and diligence knew no bounds when preparing young hearts for the happy day on which they were to receive Jesus in the Sacra-

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ment of His love for the first time. At recreation with the children Mother Mary Gonzaga was all gaiety and animation, and they so loved to hear her speak of God, that naturally the conversation took a pious turn, and the charm of her manner was such that they never wearied listening to her. Once, St. Aloysius being named, a child near her said: "Mother, I really think you try to imitate this saint." She sweetly answered: "No, dear child, I have the presumption to aim higher." "Well, then," rejoined the youthful inquirer, "so you imitate the Blessed Virgin." "My aim," replied the mistress, "is still higher, Jesus is the Model I have chosen for my imitation." When they wanted to bring an unusual expression of peace and love upon her countenance, they knew they had but to mention the Blessed Sacrament, or to speak of death; she would then say; "Oh, children, how little do you think of that beautiful sentence in your night prayers: 'I desire to be dissolved and to be with Christ.'"

Her piety and gentleness were not, however, soft and effeminate, but solid, active, and industrious. With the children she was full of tenderness, and had the heart of a mother for those whose rude and hard characters render them difficult to manage. With the hot-tempered, she generously dissimulated, and watched for a favourable moment when she could win them to the right. Her meekness might have bordered on passiveness, but there was a point in her character which amply supplied for any excess in meekness, and this point was a sweet gravity which when possessed by those in authority, acts most

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powerfully. As Mistress of Schools, Mother Mary Gonzaga considered herself as a mother to her young charge, and thus entered into every little detail concerning their health, comfort, and improvement. With unwearied patience she worked and laboured for those happy ones confided to her holy keeping.

Her religious duties were discharged with no less perfection. Rarely was her place in choir vacant at a quarter-past five, A.M., for she always tried to be first in choir, as she said, "to get our Lord's blessing." Through a spirit of self-denial she laboured with all her strength in the different duties of the day. Her desires for mortification led her to omit no practice for which she could obtain the sanction of obedience. Often, when fatigued and suffering, if requested to retire earlier than usual, she would answer: "I know not what sentence might strike me in the reading at supper, which absence might cause me to lose."

Besides revering Mary Teresa as her superior, and one holding God's place over her, she gave her the love of a devoted child, was ever ready to fulfil her slightest wish, and even anticipate her orders. On the eve of a ceremony when all, but particularly Mother Mary Gonzaga, were unusually busy, a most unexpected and intricate piece of business had to be arranged. Rev. Mother seemed for a moment perplexed whom to turn to; at last she sent for Mother Mary Gonzaga, saying: "I am really ashamed to burden her, but I cannot help it; she is ever ready." After a short time, Mother Mary Gonzaga reappeared, and sweetly said: "Rev. Mother,

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that business has been arranged according to your wishes," then quietly withdrew. Rev. Mother, turning to the sister with her, exclaimed: "That is the way Mary Gonzaga always acts."

From the beginning of the year 1839, though none could see any change in the usual delicate health of their dearly loved Sister, yet she herself was fully persuaded that year was to end her exile. While preparing to celebrate the half jubilee of her beloved Rev. Mother, she often said to the sisters: "I feel that I am not long for this world. This is the last opportunity I shall have of proving my affection for my dearest mother."

After the jubilee festivities, Rev. Mother said to her: "Mary Gonzaga, you have worked a great deal for me. What can I do for you in return?" The holy religious replied: "The only favour I ask is to be allowed to make a renewal of spirit"—by which is meant a retreat of thirty days. Her request was granted, but the term was limited to three weeks. The morning her retreat ended Mother Mary Gonzaga, feeling more than usually ill, in compliance with the rule, acquainted Rev. Mother, who was much alarmed, but thought that rest and care would preserve her. Soon the reality became apparent to all. On the 19th August, she was attacked by a violent fit of hemorrhage. She knew the end was come, and made an entire oblation of her life into the hands of God. Four weeks ensued, during which the feeble spark of life lingered in her suffering body. Tranquil, almost motionless, she lay, clasping in her hands a crucifix, and the image of her Mother Mary.

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Her lips moved in silent prayer through the long day and sleepless nights. She spoke little, never complained, never asked for anything, but once when she begged of Rev. Mother to allow the sisters to sing the *Magnificat* and the *Miserere*, which she had so loved during life. When they had complied with her request, Rev. Mother, who was constantly by her side, remembering how dearly she had loved, how faithfully she had served the young souls entrusted to her care, asked if she had any suggestion to make for their welfare. "Yes," she replied, "have them trained to perform well the first and last duties of the day. Never allow any privileged boarders into our schools, and see that the sisters vigilantly attend to the order of every department connected with the children."

When the dying religious was receiving Extreme Unction, she appeared completely exhausted and incapable of any exertion, but when the priest, turning towards her with the Blessed Sacrament, repeated the words, "*Ecce Agnus Dei*," summoning her remaining strength, she rose, unaided, on her knees, and with transports of joy received her Lord and her God who had come to bless the last hours of her exile. Shortly after, as the infirmarian was obliged to go elsewhere for a few minutes, and dreaded leaving her alone, she said: "I shall not be alone, Oh! no. I have Jesus within me, and He is all to me." She still lingered on, and hearing it said that she was to receive Holy Communion on Friday, exclaimed: "Oh! I hope to be admitted into our Lord's Heart on that day."

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The evening before the confessor said he would bring her Holy Communion at five o'clock the next morning, and she abstained from drinking all that night, though suffering from intense thirst. Calm and collected as ever, she went through the Stations with the sister who watched by her, and when four o'clock came reminded her that it was time to prepare for our Lord's coming, then asked for her communion veil, which was no sooner put on than the change for death was visible. Rev. Mother and the chaplain arrived just in time to receive her last sigh. Our blessed Lord, indeed, came to His faithful spouse, but no longer under the sacramental veil; she was now face to face with her Beloved. 'Thus did she pass away from the world to the Father, from faith to sight, from hope to joy, from the shadow to the reality, from darkness to light, from the toilsome race to the hard-won crown, from the misery of this present life to the everlasting glory of a life never to pass away.'

It was on the 20th September, 1839, that Mother Mary Gonzaga went to her reward, and speaking of her afterwards her confessor exclaimed: "She died a perfect religious."

With her name we shall close the enumeration of those who were the first pillars of the edifice of the Irish branch of the Institute of the Bessed Virgin.

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CHAPTER VII.

The Mother Superior.

THE preceding chapter was mainly occupied in tracing the characters of some of the first inmates of the happy religious home at Rathfarnham. It seems almost impossible to pass on further without dwelling for some short space of time on the great qualities of her who was the spiritual mother of this holy swarm of souls, the queen bee, so to speak, of this hive of virtue and labour for God. This is the more natural, inasmuch as the life of Mary Teresa Ball is not full of incident. It is not a life of any external vicissitude, in which succeeding years have brought altogether new trials and occasions of virtue, in which there have been great alternations of prosperity and adversity, of joy and sorrow. That it was a life of progress and continual advance in grace, that it had its secret pains and trials, we cannot doubt, any more than we can doubt that it was full of ever-varying beauties in the eyes of God; but outwardly it

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was uniform: it was spent mainly in one place, and in a continual succession of unchanging occupations; it had few striking incidents breaking its general harmony, no catastrophes, no imminent perils and sudden deliverances. A life like this may be very pleasing, and even wonderful, in the eyes of the Angels, but its incidents are, to a great extent, hidden from mortal ken. Its main outward features were such as the arrival of new recruits, the sending forth of fresh swarms of sisters to various places in Ireland or elsewhere, the loss by death of valued children in religion, and the gradual development and strengthening of the Institute by the sanction of the supreme authority in the Church. The cares of government, and the occasional trials or strains which they involved, are hardly matters for a narrative such as this, though they occupied a considerable part of the life of Mary Teresa.

Thus that life becomes, after the few years of her novitiate and her first trials at Rathfarnham, almost lost in the life of the religious body over which she was called to preside. To those who lived with her it was different. So strong and so beautiful a character could not but make itself felt by them in a thousand various manifestations

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of charity and energy, prudence and vigour. She was one of the calm, serene souls who are sometimes thought to be passionless and free from emotion. They are, in truth, often the tenderest, and even the most sensitive; but their very intensity forces them to rein in their feelings, and their quiet is the quiet of depth rather than of torpor.

We can only sketch, very faintly, indeed, the character of this servant of God as it is traced for us by those who knew her best. Its foundation was the thought of the greatness of God, and of the nothingness of all but Him. Its strength, and joy, and power lay in prayer. Her very outward demeanour spoke of her deep union with God. When in church she was so still and absorbed in her devotion as to move the beholder with a kind of awe. She was most exact and punctual in all the duties which united her directly to God—the first in the morning to enter the choir, the most faithful in pouring out her heart before the tabernacle when evening came round. Her gift, as it seemed, of the presence of God was most remarkable. When addressed, we are told, she invariably paused before replying—'the quick thought of her mind turned on high, and then sought a fitting

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answer.' One who knew her well—the Rev. B. Fitzpatrick, afterwards the Abbot of Mount Melleray—asked her, at the end of a long letter, to grant him one request—to tell him what plan she adopted for keeping herself in the presence of God? He had observed that she seemed never out of that divine presence. He thought, he added, that Dr. Murray had some similar plan, for he too seemed never to lose the sense of God's presence.

It is natural to find that a soul of this character was extremely observant of silence. "Without silence," she was used to say, "no spirit of prayer; without the spirit of prayer, no perfection." This union with God was preserved by the strictest observance of the ordinary rules with which the practice of prayer is protected and secured. No beginner in the spiritual life could be more faithful in the exact preparation of meditation, according to the prescriptions of St. Ignatius. For many years she would entrust to no one but herself the duty of instructing the novices on this point, and her carefulness and wisdom in these instructions is remembered most gratefully by those who benefited by it. 'A sister, who attended her in many severe attacks of illness, relates how, when the bell

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rung at five in the morning for meditation, the Rev. Mother, though unable to rise and in acute pain, reverently recited the invocation of the Holy Ghost, and desired the sister to read aloud the points of meditation, as if she were in choir, thus uniting with the community as far as was in 'her power.' She was very fond of the services of the Church, which for her were never too long; her devotion to the Blessed Sacrament was most intense, and was the foundation of her great zeal for raising new altars and sanctuaries. In the same spirit, she had an intense joy in receiving new postulants for the religious life, looking on each religious person as a temple in which our Lord was to dwell by a special presence.

Her devotion to the Sacred Heart of our Lord led her to dedicate the Church of Rathfarnham to that adorable Heart. It was the first church in Ireland so dedicated. She also introduced there the devotion of the first Fridays of each month in honour of the Sacred Heart, and founded the Confraternity there. It need hardly be said how tender was her love for and her confidence in the Immaculate Mother of God, and her devotion to her holy spouse, St. Joseph. In this respect she was always labouring to make

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herself a true child of St. Teresa, whose name she bore. 'One of her frequent injunctions,' writes one who knew her well, 'was that we should often implore, through his intercession, the grace of the interior spirit and a happy death. To this saint of the hidden life she dedicated the House of Rathfarnham, remembering, no doubt, the devotion which so many years before had prompted the founders of the Institute of Mary to place it under his care and protection.'

With the fervour of true Catholic instinct, she literally threw her whole soul into the celebration of the feasts of the Church, dwelling on them with joy or holy sadness, according as these feelings were expressed in the liturgy. Recreation seldom passed by without some allusion to the feast of the morrow. Her mind seemed to be overflowing with the thoughts and doings of the servants of God. In order to promote devotion to the saints, and that, as much as possible, all of them might be commemorated, she devoted herself during many precious hours to the work of compiling the copious Martyrology now in use in the houses. Devotion to the holy Angels could not fail to find its fitting place in one who at the venerable Convent of St. Mary's, York, had imbibed the true spirit of the Institute. No

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more touching traditions have been handed down to us than those of the watchful care and love of the angelic spirits for the children of their Immaculate Queen. Among the saints, St. Antony of Padua, St. Francis of Assisi, and St. Gertrude, were specially honoured by her. Equable and patient in adversity, never was her smile so sweet as when the cross was pressing most heavily. "We know," said a Sister, "when some unusual trial had come by the beautiful smile on our mother's face." When the news of the destruction of St. Joachim's Loretto, at Clontarf, arrived, the answer rose as if familiar to her lips, "the Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away, blessed for ever be His name!" The same writer goes on to speak of her great freedom from human respect, and her zeal for souls. In this she was the true daughter of St. Ignatius, whose spirit it is that animates the children of the Institute.

In dealing with the children who were under her charge in the school, she was very careful about the fulness of their religious instruction. This she kept for many years in her own hands, notwithstanding her many most important avocations. She was, in fact, very fond of children and always ready with a smile for them. She

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would excuse their failings and praise their slightest efforts. On one occasion a Sister complained of the dulness and inattention of a little girl. Mary Teresa undertook to help her in the task of instructing this difficult pupil, and for some considerable time gave her two lessons a day. She used to warn the Sisters to be brief in their reprovals of the children, if they wished them to attend to the reproofs. She was not insensible to the necessity of firmness and self-command in dealing with them—to which, indeed, her own natural disposition might seem to incline her—but she always insisted on the importance of a truly motherly treatment of them.

Mary Teresa had a great love for the poor. Once, on occasion of a mission given by the Vincentian Fathers in the parish of Rathfarnham, she undertook to provide for the instruction of all the women and children. She herself undertook the work, and when, on the first day, a most unexpected number came for instruction, she continued standing for two hours with nearly two hundred before her. She used to congratulate the Sisters who had much to deal with the poor, on the great meritoriousness of their labours. It was her delight, especially, to provide food and clothing for them at Christmas,

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in honour of the Holy Family, and to make some reparation for the neglect with which they were received at Bethlehem. 'During the whole Christmas season,' writes the Religious whom we so frequently follow, 'her whole being seemed filled with unutterable love for the Infant of the crib, and many still recall the lasting impression on their young hearts, as they listened to her fervent tones, when reciting aloud the Litany of the Infant Jesus. At His feet she learned the very perfection of that holy poverty which charmed His divine eyes.'

After this we shall not be surprised to learn that her love for the exact practice of the virtue of religious poverty was very great. She regarded it as the bulwark of religion, which, if it were impaired, would cause the ruin of the whole edifice. The perfection of this poverty consists in the strict observance of the common life which leads to that freedom of soul which is the very essence of the vow. 'In all the details of community life,' says her chronicler, 'she was a model, and, except in times of illness, allowed herself no dispensation in food, clothing, or lodging. For many years the only distinction in the furniture of her cell was the absence of a mattress. No superfluous article was ever per-

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mitted to remain with her—even her books of devotion were old and worn.

'In the same way she was remarkable for exactness in the daily observance of the community duties. The toll of the bell or the chime of the clock always found her prompt and willing, as if the summons came from God Himself. She looked on regularity in actions as being like the symmetry of a building, which adds to its beauty as well as to its strength. She said that she had prayed that no house of her Institute might stand, in which the holy rules were not observed. In this regularity and punctuality of observance she was as conspicuous herself as she was exacting of its perfection in others.

"Nothing pained her more than any, even the slightest, infringement of the heavenly virtue of charity. In her exhortations to the novices she often dwelt on the words of the wise man, "There are six things which the Lord hates, but the seventh His soul abhors, that is, sowing discord among brethren."' 'Many instances could be given,' says the same writer, 'of the kind thoughtfulness in which she confirmed by example her almost daily entreaties that everyone should avoid giving unnecessary trouble to the lay sisters, whose busy hands are employed in

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attending to the order of God's house. She looked on the use of manual labour as a means to maintain religious persons in that lowly dependence which they should cherish. For this reason she wished all, young and old, to do what they could in that way, reminding them frequently that they came into religion to serve and not to be served. She herself set the example in this respect, as in so many others. When organising a new foundation, she generally proceeded to the house with one or two companions, some weeks before the arrival of the community, to arrange everything for their reception, and her spirit of labour at these times often shamed the young and thoughtless. At the foundation of Loretto, Bray, three small rooms were papered by her own hands. So diligent was her appreciation of every work of God's household that her hand was always first to engage in any general extra work, from picking fruit in the garden to embroidering vestments for the church. Her needle-work was exquisitely neat, and, when teaching the novices, she could not endure to see an imperfect stitch, though she would say playfully that she did not wish them to spend as much time hemming a duster as hemming a corporal. Her desire was to see everyone

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earnest about what she had to do, saying, were it only to pick up straws from morning till night, we should do it with alacrity and holy joy. One of her invariable sayings was, that what was done for God should be well done. Therefore she aimed at perfection, even in the minutest details, and everything that came from her hands bore the impress of her painstaking character. She could not bear to see carelessness in others, and frequently, even when much hurried, she would interrupt her occupations to teach a Sister how to fold or tie a parcel properly or to perform other such trifles well.'

Another person who knew her well has spoken of the almost queenly dignity of manner in which her firmness and stability of character were reflected. Without something of this kind she could never have accomplished the work which was entrusted to her. She, who had shrunk so with so much thorough humility and distrust of herself from the position for which Dr. Murray designed her from the first, was firm and strong when it was her duty to discharge its responsibilities. Her straightforwardness in views and actions amounted sometimes to inflexibility, and was not always perfectly appreciated. In the same way she was sometimes

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thought cold and reserved. She was not so to those who confided in her. She required, perhaps, to be assured of the earnestness of purpose of those who came to her in difficulties, and when once so convinced, she could be tenderness itself in making allowance for human weaknesses, and in giving her attention and sympathy even to very small miseries. She was strict in enforcing the religious discipline to which she attached so much importance, but, at the same time, full of compassion for those who needed indulgence and comfort. This was especially the case in trials of an interior kind. She had a special devotion to the dying, and was always herself eager to assist them. On two occasions her distress was very great because, in consequence of her own ill health at the time, the Infirmarian omitted to summon her to the deathbeds of two of the Community. She felt so tenderly for the sorrows of her religious children, that she was usually unable to communicate to them the news of the deaths of their relatives, leaving this painful task to the confessor of the convent. She did not hesitate to reprove her subjects, and to prepare them for labours or posts of importance by humiliations and corrections. But she did all this with great tenderness of heart.

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For faults which might bring discredit on the community, she exacted public reparation, and among these, we are told, she reckoned want of punctuality or care in sacristans, the keeping tradesmen waiting, or any neglect of the care due to the children in the house. Her spirit of mortification had led her to adopt many little practices of penance for herself, but she was often slow in allowing them to others. Her desire of suffering she constantly satisfied in little things, as when in her illness she refused to take something which might have made a bitter draught less unpalatable, saying that it was by such little acts of self-denial that she hoped to shorten her purgatory.

We shall conclude this sketch of the character of Mary Teresa by inserting a few papers that remain in her handwriting for her own spiritual guidance and also some of her letters, of which we possess far too few, especially some which she wrote from time to time to her old beloved religious home, the convent at York. These last will help to give an idea of the close union of heart and practice which she desired to maintain with the original house of the Institute in England, as shown by the care she takes to give an account to her correspondent of the

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customs and rules which were observed at Rathfarmham.

The following examen of conscience on the subject of charity seems to belong to the earlier years of Mary Teresa's rule as Superior at Rathfarnham:—

A. M. D. G.

First Motive. The mercy of God extends to all.

Second Motive. The nearest imitation of the Divinity.

Third Motive. The more defective the object, the more Godlike is the work of mercy.

First Practice. Every morning to place all my subjects before God, to know the method I should use towards each that day.

Second Practice. Never to decide any point without prayer.

Third Practice. To remember that the mercy I exercise will be repaid a hundred-fold.

Fourth Practice. Every hour to do a kind act for God.

To be read every day till 1st July, 1831.

Another paper we may insert in this place

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seems to be a series of resolutions on the Passion of our Lord :—

1. To atone for the injuries our Lord received on the cross, I will always speak with sincerity.

2. To console our Lord who foresaw that many would be lost, in spite of his intense sufferings, I will speak kindly to all, and never abruptly.

3. In memory of the desolation of our Lord, when abandoned by his Father, I will pray as if I saw Christ before me.

4. In union with the mental pain endured by our Lord, when forsaken by all, I will bear the loss of friends.

5. I will conform to the Divine Will when sickness or crosses occur, and I will unite my death to that of Jesus.

There is another paper which seems to belong to the same subject :—

1. Taking bitter draughts, I will unite with our Lord's portion of gall.

2. When weary I will reflect on our Saviour's carrying the cross.

3. In disagreeable company I will think of our Lord's sweetness with the illiterate disciples.

4. I will endeavour to be regular at every observance for love of Jesus who suffered countless pains for love of men.

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CHAPTER VIII.

Some Letters.

THE letters of Mary Teresa at our disposal are, as has been said, very few. They must be considered simply as specimens which more or less illustrate the simple, earnest, and thoughtful character of the writer. Unfortunately, also, they are by no means all dated. The first one we insert was evidently to a spiritual child, one of Mary Teresa's own nuns, at one of the filiations as it seems at Dublin :—

'*8th December*, 1838.

'DEAREST N.,

'I wish you, during life, fidelity to grace equal to that of our dear, sweet Mother Mary, from her Immaculate Conception till her glorious Assumption! Are not all good wishes centered in this one? May each of us arrive at the degree of perfection marked out for us in the councils of the Most High from all eternity.

'You did well to unfold to me your ideas, apprehensions, and uneasiness. The will of God is that one should guide and assist the other to heaven, and the miseries of life lessen in proportion as we un-

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bosom our mind to one appointed by God himself to be our leader in the dreary path of this exile from our true country.

'Holy Communion is no less beneficial though our minds may be beset with temptations. It is true, the more we desire this heavenly food, the greater grace we shall obtain; but it does not depend on us to have always a sensible relish for this banquet of Angels. I would not omit one Communion for which I had leave, for we are accountable for the graces we should receive if we approached.

'Monday will be the feast of Loretto House. I am called away.

'TERESA OF JESUS.'

To the Same.

'*23rd December*, 1838.

'DEAREST N. OF JESUS,

'May the Divine Infant find a sweet resting place in our souls, to compensate for the coldness of the season, and still more frozen hearts of the inhabitants of Bethlehem, at his first coming on earth.

'If your "Ananias" approve of your making a retreat at Christmas, so do I.

'Your application of an instrument, moving as it does to the humiliation of the soul, I find correct and suitable to show us our complete nothingness.

'Dearest Mother Mary Magdalen is the most enviable being on earth. February is likely to seal

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her union with the object of her love in eternal contemplation and fruition.

'Yours ever affectionate,

'TERESA OF JESUS.'

'*14th November*, 1839.

'MY DEAREST N.,

'"What we are in the sight of God, that we are and nothing more." Does not that truth bring conviction to the mind? "Praise will not cure an evil conscience, nor will censure injure a sound one."

'What peace there is in being wholly between God and ourselves!

'With St. Ignatius, I think, if there is a pure intention, the usual times for prayer suffice. I would not then wish for the singularity of two Retreats of eight days in the year.

'May St. Gertrude obtain for us a share of her conformity to the holy will of God,

'Your own, as ever,

'F. B.'

'*30th October*, 18—.

'MY DEAREST N. OF JESUS,

'I wish you a truly happy Natal or Baptism day. Oh! what a blessing is the gift of faith conferred in Baptism; and existence too is valuable in this exile, because thereby we can merit immortal glory.

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'Your frame requires strength; aim then chiefly at interior penance.

'Your fond

'TERESA OF JESUS.'

'*Loretto, Rathfarnham.*

'MY DEAREST N. OF JESUS,

'You did not write anything unnecessary or superfluous in your late communication concerning your soul. To reply in order to your dear letter, I advert first to the interior words expressed to you; when they are according to divine faith, they are to be prized as coming from God, the Giver of every good gift. Such interior words often afford comfort in the absence of all other support. We live in God St. Paul says: it is not then to be wondered at that He speaks within us when we move in Him.

'Each of our actions should be performed as perfectly as possible for God, who is glorified by small as well as by great things.

'We must not omit acting creditably for fear of desiring esteem, for Satan transforms himself into an angel of light in such instances.

'We should beware of showing we are struggling against temptation by any violent exterior emotion: when we are sure we resisted, we need not be uneasy.

'A wish for humiliation comes from God. The intention with which others act should not be fathomed; we may have received more favours and consequently be more accountable.

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'Follow the attraction of the Holy Ghost calmly to remain in the presence of God and to be disengaged. If others are attracted to works of zeal they do well to correspond.

'Do not omit Holy Communion. If I have omitted answering any of your difficulties, write to me again; I shall never cease wishing to be useful to you in Christ Jesus.

'It is desirable that every gift of God should be pressed into his service.

'Providence manifested His designs in sending you into town for many purposes: His minister there suits your dispositions. Whilst you have the light, walk in it with simplicity.

'Your affectionate well-wisher,

'TERESA OF JESUS.'

'MY DEAREST N. OF JESUS,

'Your prayer for the dear invalid is good, but a still better one is, that she may glorify God by doing His will, as to long or short life.

'The conviction of the sweet presence of God is not an illusion, for in Him we live, and move, and have our being. Frequent reflection on the power, wisdom, and love of God, presiding over our minutest concerns, is truly consoling.

'Do not fear to trespass by addressing me; to prepare the sanctuary of the heart for God is my happy function. In His strength the weak are omnipotent against the wiles of Satan.

'Your own

'TERESA OF JESUS.'

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'*Loretto, May-day.*

'My dearest N. of Jesus,

'I omitted writing that the Sacramental species does not remain longer than about a quarter of an hour within us, and St. Teresa says, that "the most important moments of our life are those after Holy Communion." Suppose you consider your heart an altar, and that Jesus comes to perform on it the same operations that He effected on Calvary, or on the altar where Mass was said. Unite your adorations to his. His acts are yours. Avail yourself of them to glorify His eternal Father.

'Love separates Jesus from the splendour of His glory, to unite Himself to you, in return, renounce self, and all persons and things, to be solely His without reserve.

'Holy Communion should raise the soul above natural love, and elevate it to the love of God by mortification.

'Ask as often as you please any question that will contribute to your peace.

'Our Lord having said, "that He came to cast fire on the earth, and what does He will but that it should burn," there is no doubt but we should live a life of love and fan the flame at recreation, by using the organ of speech—the tongue, which conveys the precious body of Christ to nourish our souls, as the instrument to inflame our companions with divine love.

'Let us pray that our Church may be begun this month of Mary.

'Say if ante-pendium suits.

'Your own fond

'F. B.'

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'*Ash-Wednesday, Rathfarnham.*

'DEAREST N.,

'You will find in 7th Maxim of Guillorè useful instructions. You may in Lent make an additional visit to our Lord. His minister will direct the other practices you wrote about.

'Your affectionate

'TERESA OF JESUS.'

'*Easter Tuesday.*

'*Alleluia.*

'MY DEAREST N. OF JESUS,

'Do you not admire the ways of Providence in conducting souls to Him? When He wishes us to excel in any virtue, He permits us to be tempted against it. You meditated on humility, God mercifully provided for you the means of exercising it. In attending to our sanctification we must not give offence to anyone. Our dear Lord is to be considered in each of His spouses; He perfects them by degrees, lest a sudden elevation from imperfection to sanctity should produce pride. St. Ignatius discerns the evil spirit, saying, "disturbance of mind comes from his suggestions;" this enemy avails himself of our natural propensities to tempt us.

'Whatever prevents our peace is to be rejected as injurious, for the peace of God surpasses all human understanding.

'When in desolation, can we not unite with our Lord, saying, "My God, my God, why hast Thou for-

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saken me?" It is a relief to present our Lord with our offering of resignation in His extreme agony.

'Your devotion to the sweet Sacred Heart reminds me to mention that the entrance into that divine abode is only open to the little, the naked, and the solitary. Be yours then such.

'Your fond

'TERESA OF JESUS.'

'*Loretto, St. Catherine's Feast.*

'MY DEAREST N.,

'I was glad to receive your communication, for I am solicitous for your progress.

'With your patron, we can say, relative to all earthly things, "What is all this to eternity?" To enkindle the flames of divine love, think of the perfections of our infinitely good God, of His peculiar love to you, of His special love in sending sufferings that you may resemble Jesus. Uneasiness in your case comes from the enemy. Do not indulge it. St. Catherine of Genoa, though actively employed, ever thought of God, thus St. Aloysius chose her for patroness.

'I am ever desirous to be useful to you, but until God wills you to be consoled, vain will be human efforts. Be patient in suffering.

'Your own,

'F. B.'

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'*Friday, 9th Nov.*, 18—.

'MY DEAREST N.,

'Guilloré, of the Society of Jesus says, that "we each propose to be sanctified in a way that differs from the designs of God over us. To die to self, we must then renounce our views and receive as from the hand of Providence the various occurrences of life, each of which will contribute to our sanctification, if we only concur willingly in the operations of God. The apprehension of others knowing we aim at perfection in practising humility, should not deter us, for Satan knows how to prevent our advancement by that illusion."

'Your view of conforming to the holy will of God in everything is the best means of being sanctified.

'May we all glorify God at any rate.

'Your solicitous Mother,

'TERESA OF JESUS.'

The following are two letters to a former pupil:—

'*Loretto House, Rathfarnham.*

'MY DEAREST KATE,

'Do not distress yourself to read my affectionate sentiments expressed on paper, unless you find yourself equal to the task.

'You and I were spared much useless regret by not meeting lately; it is not necessary for me to see you, to remember you before God, the only way now I can prove my love.

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'I consider you a fortunate child to be freed from the vicissitudes of life, yet to be entitled to receive the reward of a good and faithful servant of our Lord, who does not expect much, only the heart, which you have entirely given to Him who alone is good.

'Are you able to repeat "Eternal Father, in the name of Jesus, grant that I may love you?"

'Your struggles will soon have an end, but the recompense will be eternal. Oh! my dearest child, what glory is reserved for your patient acceptance of cough and weakness, and all the miseries which must precede your entrance into the kingdom of God. Sorrow will be no more for you, nor separation from the sole object of your eternal love.

'You shall ever be remembered by your fond friend,

'FRANCES BALL.'

To the Same,

'*Loretto House, Rathfarnham,*

'*2nd October*, 1836.

'MY DEAREST KATE,

'When you are able to hear my affectionate inquiries for you, let my lines be read to you, but do not distress yourself to write, only say how you are.

'I know you often express to our good God, that you love Him with your whole heart. Is He not infinitely good to crown you with eternal glory in

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His kingdom, where alone He is magnificent? How few have your trials been, and how immense the recompense that awaits you! A few more struggles, dearest child, and heaven is yours, without fear of ever losing it! To-day is the festival of your Mother the Blessed Virgin Mary, and of your good angel guardian also; with so powerful advocates you have nothing to fear. Since I cannot be at your side to impart comfort to you, daily at Mass I say the Collect of the Sick, that every blessing may descend on you.

'I will not weary you with a longer epistle, for you know you are very dear to your

'Affectionate friend,

'FRANCES BALL.'

We now pass on to the letters written to the Superior of the Convent, Micklegate Bar, York, making no excuse for giving them almost entire.

'*Loretto, Rathfarnham, Dublin,*

'*4th February*, 1841.

'VERY DEAR REV. MOTHER ANGELA,

'All things succeed here; we never spent so healthful and happy a winter; earnestly soliciting your prayers, being in great dread of eternity, though

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not one tie binds me to earth, and entreating sisterly affection to each of yours; with love to my pet, Mary, to whom I have not leisure to write one line.

'Dear Rev. Mother Angela,

'Your attached Sister in Jesus,

'FRANCES BALL.'

'*Loretto, Rathfarnham, Dublin,*

'*Low Sunday,* 1841.

'VERY DEAR REV. MOTHER MARY ANGELA,

'I had not one minute free to communicate my answer to your favour of 23rd ult.; the same post despatched a pleasing letter from the German Priest in Rome, who is to conduct our Sisters to India. His reverence justly congratulates with me on the inestimable acquisition Bengal possesses by the appointment of Dr. Carew to that vacant see. We refused to accompany Dr. Carew to Madras, on account of the climate; Providence favours ours, by translating his Lordship to the destination of our missioners, who are all Irish, except one from London. Not one will relinquish her appointment, which zeal pleases His Holiness, also the Cardinal Prefect of Propaganda, and its saintly Secretary, Monsignor Cadolini.'

It will be seen that in this last sentence, as in many others which occur in the letters here given, Mary Teresa refers to incidents which have not yet been related in this Memoir. It

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seems better to give the letters without break, and let the succeeding narrative clear up whatever may appear obscure in them.

'Dear Mary Magdalen Chadwicke need not have the least uneasiness respecting any letter addressed to me, the contents being forgotten; I must have ascribed them to some unknown cause, which I could not guess; multiplied known sources of pain afford occupation which prevent my imagining evils.

'To my loved Mary[1] I would willingly write, but days roll on without allowing me a moment's leisure; the thought of the immortal soul is so engrossing, that time seems lost which is not occupied in directly procuring my own or my neighbour's salvation. I know dear Mary does not now require my assistance. I trust she prays for me.

'18th April is Dr. Murray's natal day, and St. Mary of the Incarnation, whose life by Charles Butler is in the 13th volume of "Saints' Lives."

'Mary will remember our ever-to-be-lamented chaplain, Rev. P. Byrne. I read his sermon for Low Sunday to the Community; he asks: "Who will be saved?" Jesus Christ says: "He who perseveres unto the end, he will be saved." May such, dear Angela, be our happy lot!

'Our excellent organ was erected for 25th March. We enjoy in our new convent the best health; union and concord dwell within the walls. For all favours

[1] Her niece then at York as a pupil. She afterwards joined the Institute.

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may we be truly grateful. I am indebted to all at Micklegate, and request most affectionate souvenir to them from

'Your sincere and devoted,

'FRANCES BALL.

'Mary will like to see emblems similar to our Church; the window to the east has a wheel which is to be stained.'

'*Loretto, Rathfarnham, Dublin,*
'*10th Sept.*, 1841.

'VERY DEAR REV. MOTHER,

'This day twenty-five years ago, our first postulant, M. Austin Sheridan, arrived at York. May she rest in peace.

'I was greatly pleased with dear Mary Ball's letter. I will ask the address of Miss Gahan and write it to Mary.

'We observe all the customs as appointed. With respect to abstinence on Friday, it ceases with us from Christmas to Candlemas, from Easter to Eve of Ascension, also when a fast of the Church occurs in the week.

'When legacies fall to an individual professed with us, the individual has no more right to the legacy than any other member; the money is applied for general use. No one has been left any legacy in this community, so far as I recollect.

.

'With affection to each at Micklegate,

'Your attached,

'FRANCES BALL.'

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'*Loretto, Rathfarnham, Dublin,*
'*16th Sept.*, 1841.

'VERY DEAR REV. MOTHER ANGELA,

'I wrote in haste to you a few days since. I am now commissioned to ask the Poor Clares of Scorton, late of Rouen, if they have any account of St. Audeon, or Owen, to whom a beautiful church is dedicated at Rouen. This saint is patron of a parish in Dublin; a new church is being erected in honour of the Sacred Heart of Mary and of St. Audeon. The curate came yesterday with a postulant, who promises favourably. I should like to procure the desired intelligence, for the life of St. Audeon is so short in Mr. Butler for 24th Aug. that if you correspond with the Scorton nuns, I shall be much indebted for your inquiries.

.

'We have fifteen novices and three lay sisters, novices. I enclose a little note from our dear novitiate, which is a paradise in every sense; no fear of taking cold, for cloisters surround it; the same advantage exists in our church—refectory and lay sisters' hall—where no one requires to sit near a window; these apartments are thus rendered cool in summer and warm in winter.

'Our marble altar will, I trust, be shipped from Rome in November, and the marble tabernacle completed here shortly after; when carved oak stalls are made, we shall have finished the temple.

'With sisterly affection to each with you, and love to my sweet Mary,

'Your attached,

'FRANCES BALL.'

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She again writes, 11th Oct., 1841:—

'You will thank God for Loretto opening this day in Stephen's-green, Dublin.

An organ is erected and we shall shortly have High Mass.'

.

'*Loretto, Rathfarnham,*

'*St. Patrick's Day*, 1842.

'VERY DEAR REV. MOTHER,

'In sending round to our houses the first fruits from India, I include the mother abode. A postulant will come from Paris at Easter to profess for Calcutta, and no doubt some now in the gay world will join in the reaping, which will be abundant and meritorious.

'I request prayers for our Sisters Pacifica and Scholastica, who are to be professed. Mother Benedicta, Scholastica's sister, is superior at our Marine Loretto. Dr. Pusey, of Oxford, seemed to venerate her, and to wish his daughter should have society with her.

'St. Joseph's month we hope to lay the first stone of our church at the sea.

'The millions of teetotallers who this day approach Holy Communion render Ireland once more the Island of Saints.

'St. Columba's body has arrived in Dublin from Rome. Probably we shall obtain another saint's body for our new church at Dalkey.

'Loretto, Stephen's-green, has 52 day pupils; Great George's-street, 80 do.; Rathfarnham, 54

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boarders, 5 day pupils, and a poor school; Marine Loretto, as many boarders as can be accommodated until we build.

'All are well in all our houses except one child with a cold.

'My affectionate remembrance to each of yours, and to my sweet Mary Ball. Will you return the letter from India; it must travel in Ireland.

'Ever, dear Rev. Mother Angela,

'Yours sincerely attached,

'FRANCES BALL.'

'*Loretto Novitiate,*

'*Dalkey, Co. Dublin,*

'*18th Sept.*, 1843.

'VERY DEAR REV. MOTHER M. ANGELA,

'I am nearer to you since 2nd August, when our little colony, now amounting to forty, came to the sea. We are nearly settled, and have derived great benefit from the healthful breeze from the ocean. Some prefer this residence the entire year; it may be termed Cosy Lodge; and when the flower garden and Grotto to the Madonna shall be arranged, it will vie with our preceding Loretto convents. In summer we shall have, every fine Saturday evening, a procession to the Grotto, while chanting the Litany of the B. V. Mary.

'St. Teresa liked hermitages, so do I. I long to know something of my dear little Mary, to whom I am warmly attached.

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'If you have two spare copies of the printed "Litany of the Angels," or if the copies can be purchased in York, I shall be truly grateful for an envelope containing two copies by post for 29th inst., one for St. Patrick's Loretto, Gorey, the other for St. Anthony's Loretto, Dalkey.

'I commissioned each Sister, who was about to depart from this life, to procure for us a bathing lodge. We have perceived visible effects in our favour, after the demise of each of our dear Sisters.

'All enjoy their usual health. Sister Raphael is gate portress at Rathfarnham, she will probably be the next to intercede for us in heaven; she entered from the Poor School eleven years ago, aged sixteen. Only one lay sister died in twenty-two years.

'Here all bathe daily in the sea; the baths are very safe and the water strong.

'In India we have three Loretto Houses and a free school. 1st. Dec., two were professed, sisters of same parents. Two choir postulants and six laundresses go to Calcutta with the Coadjutor-Bishop and some priests. We have a boarder from Calcutta here. Our colony in India has succeeded beyond expectation.

'A Turkish girl sailed 8th September from Greece for our school; she will arrive in the costume of her country; her sister is to follow her, when of an age to improve.

'We have, each Sunday, about one hundred adults who come for instruction; some come from Dublin. The railroad approaches to Dalkey; we are a field or two from it.

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'I trust you and yours are all as well as I wish. I depend on your remembering me with affection to dear Mothers Mary Aloysia, Ignatia, Regis, to Sister Mary Aloysia, Magdalen, Xaveria, Frances, and to dear Mother Mary Xaveria, to all as if named. Mrs. Corr's religious name I do not know. The lay sisters I recommend well.

'Dr. Miley presented me with his work on "Rome," in two vols. He walked through our sixty rooms here yesterday. We have fifty fires. It requires exertion to fit up fifteen large rooms for the accommodation of pupils. We take advantage of the bathing season, which will continue till All Saints. In prayer, remember your needy Sister,

'FRANCES BALL.'

'*Loretto Novitiate, Dalkey, Co. Dublin.*
'*25th September*, 1843.

'VERY DEAR MOTHER ANGELA,

'Many thanks for the acceptable copies of the "Litany of the Angels," we diligently recite it.

'His Grace, Dr. Murray, translated the *Memorare;* copies were distributed yesterday to our poor adults of the "Commons of Dalkey," to whom a new and happy epoch has arrived. Two minutes bring passengers by Kingstown to us, and fifteen minutes suffice to convey persons from Dublin to Kingstown.

'I congratulate with you on the late additions to

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your holy community, may it prosper to the divine glory.'

[We omit here a long passage giving the details of the food and ordinary customs of the House at Rathfarnham, chiefly interesting as showing the care of the writer for perfect uniformity, as far as is possible, with the other houses of the Institute.]

'We have directed Mr. John Hogan, sculptor, to execute, in white marble, Mary, Joseph, and the Divine Infant in the Manger, for the chapel of our novitiate. We are nearly complete respecting our arrangements. A high hill will protect us in winter from cold blasts.

'I commissioned each dying Sister to procure for us a bathing lodge; everyone is pleased with what has been done. Pupils ask to pass the winter here; it is very healthful, and the view raises the soul to praise God. The rising sun, reflected on the ocean, is sublime; and the thunder, echoed through the rocks, has a magnificent sound. The value of the sea is a late discovery. The throat, when sore, is cured by flannel dipped in sea-water and a teaspoonful of spirits, then worn round the throat. Not one has a cold, new as this novitiate is. To-day a pupil arrived to commence bathing to-morrow.

'Remember me affectionately to each of your dear flock, and do pray for your needy sister in Jesus,

'FRANCES BALL.'

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'*Loretto, Rathfarnham, Dublin.*

'*2nd January*, 1844.

'VERY DEAR REV. MOTHER M. ANGELA,

'I sincerely wish you and yours the enjoyment of many returns of this sweet season, which I look on as my last on earth, though I enjoy usual health, increased spirits, and additional hope of heaven.

'1st January, 1835, Mary Catherine Corballis said to all our pupils: "I must say the Office well, for this is my last year for reciting it." This dear Sister was interred 31st December said year. Mary Baptist Ferrall, likewise said on 1st January, 1835, though quite well: "I shall die 2nd of July this year; so she did, at noon of the said day, when we were all present; she was rather translated, for she expressed twenty minutes before death to me: "I have no pain of body or mind." She breathed her last without one struggle.

'Now for the affairs of this world. I wrote to you last month, enclosing a small engraving of Loretto, Calcutta, and a note from Rev. Mother Mary Delphina Hart. Dr. Olliffe now finds his number made up for the Bengal mission.

.

'Each in all our houses is as well as usual; one pupil at Dalkey has a cold, which can be cured, I trust.

'I aim at doing all the good I can for six months, then an eternity of bliss, I trust, will be opened for me.

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'Our first ceremony was twenty-one years ago, on 2nd of February. The same month this year we shall also have one; many from Dublin Castle have asked to be present; may they benefit by it.

'I hope to hear you are all well. My most affectionate regards to your flock and to my niece.

'Ever dear Rev. Mother,

'Your affectionate Sister,

'FRANCES BALL.'

'*Loretto Abbey,*

'*Shrove Tuesday,* 1847.

'VERY DEAR REV. MOTHER ANGELA,

'This twentieth anniversary of dear Mary Baptist's removal from us, is selected to inquire for your health and for our dear sisters' with you.

'At length the Martyrology in English is being bound, ninety copies remain at 53 Stephen's-green, E., to be disposed of; should any of the Communities in England wish for them I shall be glad of their being informed where they can be obtained.

'1846 was our most successful year. Our Church was consecrated 8th September, in honour of the Sacred heart of Jesus, Mary, Joseph, and St. Teresa, Virgin. The Chapel at the Novitiate, Dalkey, was consecrated 29th September, in honour of our Lady of Angels, and St. Anthony of Padua.

'We enjoy "Perpetual Adoration" these three years, beginning 5th February, 1844. This celestial

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devotion is established at Dalkey, with facility, night and day; we have many privileges; a plenary indulgence each day we communicate; it occasions great regularity, concord, and peace.

'We expect two Missions this year.

'A retreat for ladies will commence 18th March, and terminate on the Annunciation, at 43 North Great George's-street, for which I solicit prayers.

'Loretto's half Jubilee will be 4th November. Not one pupil died here; all in Ireland are well, and in November all were well in India and the Mauritius.

'5th inst., three sisters sailed from Southampton, accompanied by a priest, for Gibraltar, making forty-eight members, sent on Missions.

'At Gibraltar, poor pupils daily amount to 150, besides young ladies, boarders, and day pupils.

Boarders in the Mauritius . .	26
Ditto in Calcutta . . .	50
At Rathfarnham . . .	50
At 53 Stephen's-green, Dublin .	20
Pupils at Bon Barjiar . .	193
At Chandernagore . .	74
At Serampore . . .	24
At Chittagong—Poor . .	100

'Loretto, Darjeeling is on a mountain, it is a cold climate. Intally and Penang have each a Loretto. Thirty-three sisters were in retreat at Calcutta last autumn; seven were received there on St. Stanislaus', and three professed on St. Francis Xavier's. The Jesuits at Calcutta gave ours 300 volumes and some sacred music. They have nineteen voices for the orchestra;

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five there learn miniature painting—they painted a transparency of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph for a window.

'2nd July, 1845, I relinquished taking tea, wine, and coffee. I had but one headache since; no sickness; previously, I was confined to bed about one day each week, unfit for anything.

'We have a sweet bell for the Angelus, weight twenty-six cwt.; another louder at Dalkey; the poor say the Angelus with hats off, kneeling. Our bell is consecrated in honour of St. Michael; at Dalkey, St. Raphael.

'*Via Crucis* is performed on Friday in Lent; Rossini's "Stabat" in four parts sung in cloisters.

'Love to M. Alphonsa from

'Your fond,

'F. BALL,

'Better known to you by the name of Mary Teresa, who solicits every affectionate remembrance to each dear sister at loved Micklegate.

'We ask prayers for sisters to be received; sisters professed at Easter.

'*Loretto Abbey, Rathfarnham, Dublin.*

'*12th Jan.*, 1842.

'DEAR REV. MOTHER,

'I enclose a copy of a rescript obtained by our revered Archbishop, in our favour: I have many rescripts of Indulgences from the late Pope; one

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from Pius IX., but I have not leisure this day to forward them; they are for Loretto in Ireland.

'The first ten years spent at Rathfarnham House no nuns thought of ever quitting this enclosure until convents were offered to us, which his Grace approved of my seeing, with a nun. We have refused fourteen places offered for foundations.

'All with us are in perfect harmony; pupils all well and satisfactory. Twenty-three choir-sisters in novitiate. Our rules were abused in the newspapers. God sent us twenty-five novices. All in probation are likely to persevere; one breach of silence three months before profession would disqualify the candidate from proceeding. Three widows are in the novitiate, all mothers, one a grandmother; no children alive; one widow is aged twenty-three years.

'Grandmamma says: "No sin is committed in the novitiate." All admit that the Mistress of Novices is a saint.

'God has provided us with excellent Loretto houses wherever we filiate to. So many eyes observe us, that faults must be detected and cannot escape public censure. A priest was pleased to observe, "That it must be good seed that has spread from this Abbey all over the earth."

'Our Sisters are nicely located in Toronto opposite Lake Ontario, near the Falls of Niagara. The former name of Toronto was York.

'Darjeeling is delightfully situated on Himalaya. Fifteen guns were fired, 5th last November, when the Catholic bishop, three nuns from Loretto, and two Jesuits arrived at Bombay, while Dr. Carr, the Pro-

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testant bishop was preaching on Sunday, 5th Nov., on the Gunpowder Plot, &c. The English Governor ordered the salute. Our nuns have cannons to fire on great festivals near their church, built by Mr. Nesbitt, Bombay.

'Pray for your Sister in Jesus Christ,

'F. BALL.'

'*Loretto Abbey, Rathfarnham,*

'*Dublin, 2nd August,* 1851.

'VERY DEAR REV. MOTHER,

'Proceeding on our foundations, we visit the Blessed Sacrament before we set out and on our return for a few minutes. We commence our journey, repeating the Litany of the Blessed Virgin. In summer a light, large, black shawl covers our habit, which has an eye at each pocket-hole in the seam, and one in the seam at the back, with corresponding hooks in the waist of the habit. We remove our guimp and veil until we arrive at our destination, and substitute a stiff linen collar, with a broad hem, a deep black bonnet and thick veil; the poor call us sisters; thus Mrs. Lambert and I were accosted at the station-house, where we alighted from the train, after seeing another foundation by order of our venerated Archbishop. Our covered car and driver were in readiness to convey us to our Abbey.

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'In winter, when travelling, we wear our usual black cloth mantle, which reaches to the ground with arm-holes and a shallow collar; each traveller has a flat straw basket, with a straw handle, to hang from the arm; a small bottle of holy water, an office book, and some provisions for luncheon are contained in the basket. We keep the blinds of the car down, say our beads, knit stockings while driving, and make our examen.

'Except in Lent, dinner is at three o'clock in our day schools; examen at a quarter to three, when pupils are dismissed.

'Walking out, we invariably wear strong leather shoes; coming in we change leather shoes for cloth shoes, with thin soles, not to make noise and to avoid damp; our pupils are seen change their shoes.

'The Sisters of Charity wear mantles always walking out.

'We have black Sisters and copper-coloured at Calcutta. In 1850 we lost Sister M. Ignatia there, M. Baptista, and M. Agnes, who knelt by Rev. Mother on Maunday Thursday, were taken ill on Good Friday, and died on Saturday; for each we say one dirge and offer one Mass.

The doctor cannot do any more for our Sister M. Ignatia, at St. Francis Xavier's Loretto, 53 Stephen's-green, East; she alone is likely soon to enjoy heaven; let us pray her in.

'Easter week we shall have ceremonies—four candidates.

'Sometimes ladies come from England to make a

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retreat at Loretto, Great George's-street, so I enclose a notice. His Grace will open the retreat.

'With affectionate and best wishes to the dear instructresses of my early youth, and to dear Mary Alphonsa,

'Very dear Rev. Mother,

'Your sister in Christ,

'FRANCES M. T. BALL.'

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CHAPTER IX.

Progress of the Institute at Home.

THE interior life of the community at Rathfarnham during these early years of the existence of the new Institute, must be gathered, if we are to gather it at all, from the slight sketches which have been already given of Mary Teresa and her first associates. The daily round of community duties, of the school classes, of labours in the poor school, the times of silent prayer and meditation, of happy recreation, and of the necessary communication with the parents of the children and others whom business or curiosity brought to Loretto, went on peacefully and calmly, while it may well be imagined that in a community formed of persons such as those who have been described to us by the good religious whose words we have been adopting, there must have been close union with God and great exercise of that playful charity which is the charm and life of a good religious home. To external eyes, there was as yet nothing great

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about Loretto. The school gradually became famous, and the services of the ladies who were there devoting themselves to the holy work of education could not but be more and more appreciated, as the circle of those who had benefited by them became wider. But as yet there was but slow growth in the number of workers, and no applications from without for fresh houses of the Institute. Most good works which are to last grow slowly, and the discipline of trial, and even of suffering, is necessary for those who are to leave behind them in the Church of God works that are to be fruitful. We are now to pass from the consideration of the virtues which were practised in the interior of the new convent to a very short narrative of the gradual spread of the Institute, first in Ireland and then in other parts of the Catholic world.

The first invitation which Mary Teresa received from outside was from Navan, in the diocese of Meath. An active and devoted parish priest had there built a house which he intended for a religious community, the members of which might undertake the work of education in his parish. It was in the year 1833, and up to that time, Mary Teresa had hardly left her house at Rathfarnham since she had first entered it.

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She was accompanied to Navan by a kind priest, the Rev. William Fitzpatrick, who devoted his time and energies so freely to the service of the Institute as to win for himself the name of the 'Friend of Loretto.' The building which was offered to the nuns was found to be sufficient for a small community in its beginnings, though by no means free from inconvenience. Mary Teresa returned to Rathfarnham, and announced to her religious children that the first filiation was now to be made.

However great may be the zeal and self-abnegation of the members of such a community, tidings of this kind can never fall on their ears without causing a pang. No persons love their homes better than those who have joined together in the service of God, humble and uninviting externally as those dwellings may be. The greater the want of worldly comforts, the greater is often the bond of affection which unites the inmates of such homes to them and to one another. To volunteer for a new foundation, with all its certain circumstances of discomfort, opposition, slenderness of resources, and the like, and to leave for this prospect the companions and superiors to whom they have long been accustomed to look for all that makes life

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bright and easy, is one of those sacrifices the magnitude of which cannot be appreciated by those outside the religious life. In the present case, as has been said, it was the first separation. Mary Teresa had no difficulty in finding fit subjects for the new enterprise. She left home on the 20th of July, 1833, with two companions, under the escort of her unfailing friend and father, Dr. Murray. She took with her Mary Frances Murphy, and Mary Paul Finn. The superioress, Mary Xaveria MacCarthy, did not join the others till the following month, when she was accompanied by a lay sister, Veronica Fox, while another sister, Agatha Daniel, followed after some interval. A boarding school and a poor school were immediately opened, and the labours of the sisters were crowned with much success from the very beginning.[1] Mother

[1] We are told by Dr. Hutch, in his 'Life of Mrs. Ball,' that Veronica Fox became a lay sister at Rathfarnham in a very remarkable way. She had entered a convent in England as a postulant, and was near the time of her profession, when she gave up her place in favour of a younger sister of her own, an orphan, whose youth and beauty made the world a very dangerous abode for her. Veronica could not obtain the admission of her sister into the convent on any other terms, as the superior was forbidden by the rule to receive more than a certain number of lay sisters. So the elder sister most

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Xaveria MacCarthy did not long remain at Navan, as she was almost immediately wanted for another foundation, of which we shall presently have to speak, in Dublin. Mary Frances Murphy was her immediate successor, but she begged so earnestly to be allowed to resign the post, that her prayers were granted, and the new convent, which was called after St. Anne, was placed under the superior who governed it for a great number of years—Mother Mary Paul Finn.

About two months after the foundation of Navan, Mary Teresa was called on to begin a day school in Dublin itself. The spot chosen was in Harcourt-street, where the school was opened on Sept. 5th, 1833. This new Loretto—for so all the filiations were called at that time—was placed under the invocation of St. Francis Xavier. After some years it was removed to a more spacious house, formerly the town mansion

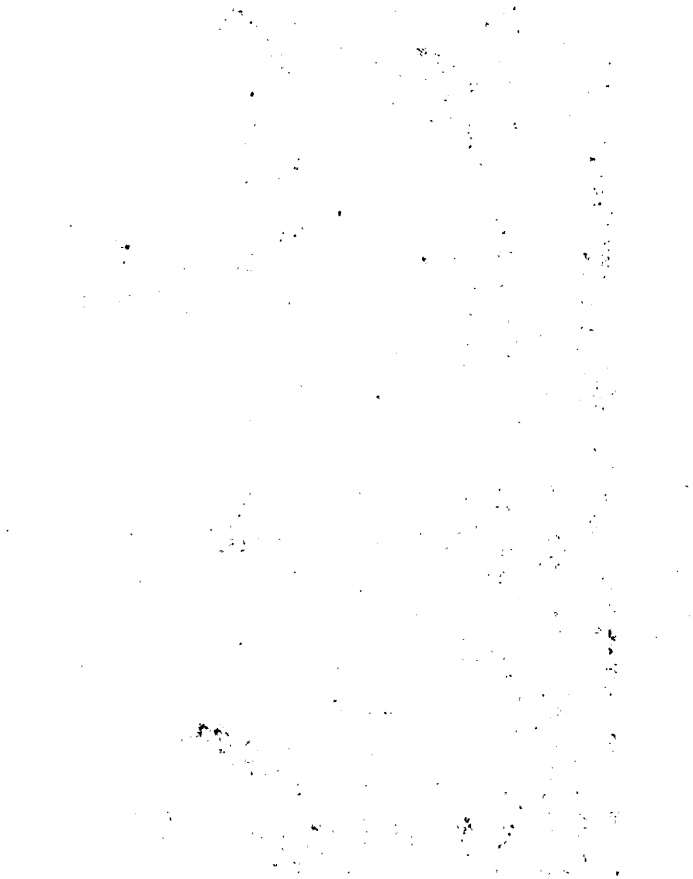
generously sacrificed her own prospects for the sake of the younger. She came over to Ireland, and fell in with a good priest, who heard her story and recommended her to go with him to Rathfarnham, and see if Mary Teresa would admit her. She was received without hesitation. She died after many years a martyr of charity, having caught her death while attending cholera patients in India.

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of Lord Charleville, No. 53 Stephen's-green. Possession of this house was taken, Oct. 6th, 1841. This school has always flourished with an abundant supply both of boarders and day pupils of the upper classes, and it is also the centre of a number of pious works and confraternities, such as that of the Children of Mary. It has also a very large and successful poor-school. The next foundation was also in another part of Dublin. Dr. Murray deemed it advisable thus to supply the wants of the large district which lay at a distance from Stephen's-green. This Loretto was placed at 43 North Great George's-street, and was dedicated to the Immaculate Conception. The house had been the residence of the Protestant archbishop of Cashel, whose study became the chapel of the nuns. An adjoining Methodist chapel was also secured and added to the house to increase the accommodation. Mass was first said in the new establishment on Jan. 1st, 1837.

About the same time Mary Teresa began to form a plan for the execution of a long-cherished desire, which hitherto she had been without the means of accomplishing as she wished. We have seen how fond she had always been of the glorious piles of ancient Christian architecture, and it had long been a vision, on which her

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THE CHURCH, LORETTO ABBEY.

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imagination had fed itself, that she might be able to raise at Loretto Abbey a church in the ancient style, not altogether unworthy of the great models of which she was so fond. But the design could not fail to be costly, and her funds were exhausted. In the June of 1836, however, she had the happiness to receive a postulant who brought with her a dowry more than sufficient for the work which was so much needed. This was a Miss Arthur, one of two sisters, the daughters of a gentleman of Limerick, a relation of the Miss Arthur who became Sister Mary Ignatia. They had been the first pupils to be admitted to the school of the nuns of the Sacred Heart at the Trinita di Monte at Rome. The eldest daughter entered the convent at Princethorpe in England. The other came with her aunt to visit Sister Mary Ignatia at Loretto, and was at once attracted by the spirit of devotion and piety which was conspicuous, both in the nuns and in the children under their charge. She had arrived at the convent, as it seems, on a Saturday; at all events she witnessed, soon after her arrival, the weekly procession to and from the little grotto of our Lady in the grounds, the nuns and children walking two and two, chanting the praises of the Mother of God. She

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had long wished, like her sister, to consecrate herself to God; and the world, in which she seemed so well fitted to shine, had wooed her in vain. Sister Mary Ignatia was her aunt, and it required but little to make her determine to enter the same holy religious home. She entered the novitiate on the Feast of St. John Baptist, 1836, and was professed two years afterwards. Her dowry was ample enough to make it, as we have said, safe for Mary Teresa to begin the long-desired work of the Church of Rathfarnham, which was to be dedicated to the Sacred Heart. The first stone was laid by Dr. Murray on the Feast of St. John Francis Regis, 1838. It was the Saturday within the octave of Corpus Christi.

The church was mainly designed by Mary Teresa herself. At that date the revival of the Christian style of architecture had not long been commenced, and it is not surprising if there should be details about the building at Rathfarnham which would not satisfy the most instructed and fastidious criticism of the present day. But no one can fail to be struck with the general effect of the Church of Rathfarnham, with its proportions, its loftiness, its arrangement, and with the lavishness with which the costliest

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materials have been used in its adornment. It is evidently the work of a loving and intelligent devotion—a devotion which reminds us of the spirit in which the Blessed Magdalene braved the criticism of her friends in her anointing of our Lord. The first Mass was said in the new church on the Feast of the Annunciation, 1840, and it was consecrated on the Feast of St. Teresa in the following October. The thought of Magdalene and her profuseness was in the mind of the preacher, Dr. Miley, who took for his text the criticism of Judas: 'Why was not this ointment sold for two hundred pence, and given to the poor?'

In the course of the following year, a sacred body from the Catacombs of Rome was sent to be placed under the altar. It was carried in solemn procession before it was deposited in its shrine. The saint's name was Columba. On the day of the arrival of the relics at Rathfarnham, a lay sister who had been given over by the doctor received the last Sacraments. Mary Teresa, full of faith, invoked the intercession of the saint whose remains were to be deposited in the new church. After a few days the sister was able to resume her former duties as portress, and she continued to discharge them for the next three years.

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While the church was building the time came round for the celebration—the first of the kind in the Irish Institute of Mary—of the silver jubilee of one of the religious, who could be, of course, no other than Mary Teresa herself. She was anxious to defer the keeping of this holy and joyful anniversary until the church itself was completed, at least till the jubilee of her profession, two years later. But her loving children at Loretto would not hear of any delay. Mary Gonzaga Corballis was especially active in hurrying on the festival. She laid her wishes and plans before the Archbishop, who gave the order to Mary Teresa, that for three months Mary Gonzaga was to have her own way, and no opposition to be made to her undertakings. Nothing was spared to make the occasion one of the purest joy, and to celebrate it with a certain kind of religious splendour. As the church was not ready, Pontifical High Mass was celebrated in the hall of Rathfarnham Abbey. Mary Teresa was crowned with the jubilee wreath by the Archbishop himself, and the festivities, in which the poor had a large share, were continued during an entire week.

We have already alluded to the kind of law by which the progress, as well as the beginning,

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of religious enterprises, such as that of the introduction of the Institute of the Blessed Virgin into Ireland, are so constantly marked by the saving Cross. It would seem as if so great an onward step as the foundation of new convents of the Order and the building of its first stately church at the mother-house, was necessarily to be accompanied by sacrifices most painful to a heart so tender as that of Mary Teresa. Certain it is that the years 1839 and 1840 were singularly marked, in the annals of Loretto, by a frequency of those losses which are at once so sad and, in their way, so consoling also—the deaths of valued and beloved members of the Institute. At the very beginning of the year 1839, Mary Magdalene Lalor was struck with the illness of which she was soon to die. She was one of the children brought up at Rathfarnham, who, before many years had passed since its foundation, began to find their way, when their education was completed, from the class-rooms to the novitiate. She was professed in April, 1832, and had been remarkable in her noviceship for her simplicity and unalterable tranquillity of mind. She was soon appointed to the very responsible post of Mistress of Novices, but her career was to be short. Her constitution had always been

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delicate, and, at the time just now mentioned, consumption declared itself. She lingered for several months, and breathed her last on the Feast of the Annunciation.

We have already mentioned the eagerness of Mary Gonzaga Corballis for the celebration of the jubilee of her Rev. Mother at the earliest possible date. This eagerness was not without a providential reason, for Mary Gonzaga herself was soon to leave earth for the next world. She died in September, 1839. Another valued member of the community was on her sick bed at the time, and was very soon to follow her to the grave. This was M. Euphrasia Gibbons, who when she died, on the 9th of December, the eve of the Feast of the Translation of the Holy House of Loretto, had only passed seven years in religion. She was a child very dear to Mary Teresa. 'Among the gifts of graces with which she was adorned,' writes the chronicler of Loretto, 'the spirit of cheerful self-denial shone pre-eminent. So constantly was this virtue practised, that it was almost impossible to discover her natural inclinations. The most worn-out garments and the most unpalatable food she always selected by preference. With her eyes steadfastly fixed on God, she trod with rapid

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steps the path of perfection. Noble and true before God and man, she successively governed the two filiations of Dublin with a prudence and zeal that won the admiration of all. Her gentle, pleasing manners adorned a life of which suffering was the constant characteristic.' "I think," she would constantly say, "that it requires more courage to live than to die." She would say to her companions in the infirmary, with a smile, "that none should be so cheerful as they, who were so near to heaven." Her spirit of labour was so great that, unable to read from the sore eyes from which she suffered, she employed her time in polishing furniture and the like. She had been attacked by her last illness on the 22nd of July, but she lingered on to the day we have named. She had been preceded by another and still younger sister, Mary Xaveria Mooney, who had been a pupil at the school at Harcourt-street, and, after a short interval, applied for admission into the Institute, and was received at Rathfarnham. She had made her profession in October, 1837, and was laid in the grave on November 9th, just one month before M. Euphrasia Gibbons. On the 29th of January of the new year, 1840, another member of the community, Sister Lucy Conlan, was also

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taken to her rest. Certainly the new church, which was then in course of building, was not to attain its completion without its due toll of sacrifices. The time was now passed when it was a matter of anxiety whether recruits could be procured for the holy work of the Institute, and the vacancies thus occasioned were very speedily filled up. But not the less was the time a time of great suffering—a time during which the thoughts and affections of Mary Teresa and her sisters were constantly drawn to the heavenly Jerusalem—of which the temple which they were raising on earth was the type and image—by the constant visits of the great Harvester of Souls.

The church itself, as has been said, was not dedicated until the October of 1840. It was not consecrated till nearly six years later, on the Feast of the Nativity of Our Blessed Lady, 1846. The Bishop of Bombay, Dr. Whelan, performed the ceremony of consecration. The bell had been solemnly blessed the year before on October 2nd. Mary Teresa spent the night before the consecration of this church in prayer before the altar. It was her great desire to honour the Blessed Sacrament, and to make reparation for the insults and neglect with which it is treated

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by so many Christians, that made her eager to institute the perpetual adoration at Rathfarnham. It was kept up for a time, but it was clearly a work which would tax too severely the strength of religious devoted to the active labours of the schools. It had to be abandoned after a trial, but the mere attempt speaks a great deal for the devotion of the nuns and their Superior. Another work begun about this time was the annual retreat for ladies, given at the convent during the absence of the children for their holidays. This good work met with some difficulties, and for a short time was intermitted. But it was again revived, and now continues a permanent occasion of spiritual blessings to a large number of souls.

The account of the buildings and other improvements at Rathfarnham itself has, for the moment, interrupted us in the narrative of the progress of the Institute in Ireland by way of new foundations. The spread of an Order for the education of the upper classes can never be very rapid, if it is to be secure and lasting. A new foundation requires trained teachers as well as experienced religious, and these are not easily or speedily formed. But the advance of the Loretto foundations was quite as rapid as could be expected, especially when it is remembered, as

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we shall see presently, Mary Teresa was called on to supply educational needs in distant parts of the world as well as in Ireland itself. The first foundation, after the time of which we have been speaking, was probably suggested by Mary Teresa's care for the health of her community. She had long desired to have a house at some bathing-place on the coast, and mentions in her letters that she had asked the Sisters to pray that this boon might be granted. It was for this purpose, among others, that the present magnificent convent at Dalkey was built by her. But there was some delay in finding a suitable site in Dalkey itself, and in the meantime a temporary branch house was opened at Bullock Castle, also on the sea. Some sisters remained there, with a small number of boarders and a day-school, for about a year, from June, 1841, to June, 1842. In the meantime the site at Dalkey was purchased, and the building begun; here, again, Mary Teresa was her own architect, and the plans are said to have been highly approved by the professional architect to whom they were submitted. The direct object of the new house was that it should serve as a novitiate, and also for the restoration to health of delicate or over-fatigued sisters. The foundation

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stone was laid on June 27, 1842, and the building was finished and occupied on August 17th, 1843. The beauty of the situation of this new house at Dalkey made it a favourite retreat for one so fond of the beauties of nature, of sea, and sky, and mountain, as Mary Teresa. Her heart was easily kindled into thankfulness to God in such a spot, and she could break out into the *Magnificat* in her strolls by the sea. It was to this house, as we shall see hereafter, that she came to die.

While the convent at Dalkey was being built the Institute was increased by a new foundation, this time in the diocese of Wexford. A fine church had lately been built at Gorey, in great measure through the liberality of Sir Thomas Esmonde, furthered, as all such works are usually forwarded in Ireland, by the self-denying contributions of the poor. Here again we find the same instinct of zeal, as in the case already mentioned of the foundation at Navan: the worthy parish priest building a fine convent by the side of his new church and schools, without having as yet any community ready to occupy it. Father Sinnott, the priest in question, applied in the first instance to the Sisters of Mercy. That community was unable at the time to undertake the new foundation. It was mentioned casually

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in the presence of Mary Teresa, by a priest, the chaplain to Rathfarnham, while on a visit to Dalkey, and she at once bade the Superior of Dalkey say that she would accept the new convent. Father Sinnott closed with the offer, and on June 21st, 1843, the Feast of St. Aloysius, the sisters sent for the purpose began their labours by opening a free school for poor children.

The convent of Gorey is connected in the annals of the Institute with the name of its first Superior, Mary Benedicta Somers, who governed it for a considerable number of years. She was one of the choicest flowers of this new religious body. We may well pause a moment to give some account of her in this place. Margaret Somers was the youngest daughter of Miles Somers of Ballywilliam, in the county of Wexford. 'She was,' says the chronicler whom we are following, 'a gentle, holy child, a model of piety and filial obedience, and a lover of the poor and the suffering.' Her childhood was darkened, or rather chastened, by the Cross. When she was three years of age, her father died. An aunt whom she loved much followed soon after, and before long her mother and elder brother died also. She entered religion in August, 1835. Her love for seclusion and for the hidden life was

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extreme, even to a degree that is sometimes incompatible with the duties of an active Order. But she never shrank from these. Her characteristic was a remarkable tranquillity and equableness of temper. She was so unmoved by things that might naturally have disturbed her, that she was thought insensible to them. A Superior once asked her this, and she confessed that she did feel them, but always united them at once to the humiliations of our Lord. She was extremely delicate and fragile, but she spared herself in nothing. Before being called on to govern at Gorey, Mary Benedicta had been Superior at North Great George's-street, and at Bullock Castle. After her designation to Gorey, she was never relieved of the burden of government till her death.

The nuns who were sent to Gorey found their convent by no means comfortable or convenient. It was the work of Mr. Pugin, whose ideas as to the requirements of religious houses were, at that time, by no means practical. 'As to the house,' said Mary Benedicta, 'I shall only say: May God enlighten the architect!' Gorey was a place where there were strong prejudices against religious education, and where the feeling of sectarian hostility ran higher than is usual, even in Ireland. All this prejudice was gradually

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beaten down by the character and virtues of the new Superior. Her charity to the poor and suffering was boundless. In the early years of the foundation the convent was naturally poor, and great economy was necessary for the maintenance of the sisters. But notwithstanding this, Mary Benedicta authorised the parish priest and curate to send to her everyone who was in distress, and the porteress was told never to send any applicant away without first apprising the Superior of the case, and no occupation was to excuse her from being disturbed by such calls. At the same time the strictest secrecy was to be observed as to the amount that was given away. She said that this almsgiving was to atone for the spiritual poverty of herself and community.

Her zeal for observance was very striking. This filiation being, like Navan, outside the diocese of Dublin, it seemed as if she had especially feared that some divergence from the customs of Rathfarnham might creep in. At the same time she was carefully dependent on the diocesan authority. Her practice of continual recollection of the presence of God, gave her a singular calmness and dignity in conversation with others. This practice was one of three maxims which she recommended to the

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Sisters for points of meditation. The other two were the daily taking up of the cross to follow our Lord, and the study of Him who was meek and humble of heart. 'On the subject of charity and mutual forbearance,' says her chronicler, 'her ideas were inflexibly strict. On one occasion, when most of the Sisters had indulged in some joke which she considered detrimental to the absent, she made no observation at the time, but the following being a general communion day, in the morning she quietly went up to the rails and removed the communion cloth. . . . Though not scrupulous, her exactness and zeal for regular discipline might appear to the less enlightened almost rigorous. Her frequent saying was: "It is by our Rules we shall be judged; let us then be very exact in observing them." Observance of rule seemed to be the guiding star of her government, and in her judgment no deviation appeared trifling.'

Another great feature in her devotion was her love for spreading among the poor objects of piety, to which they had before been strangers, such as miraculous medals and *Agnus Dei*. In the same spirit she introduced the representation of the Infant Jesus in the Crib on Christmas-day, and wrote exultingly of the great effect

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produced: 'On the first day we admitted a few to see it, but the news of the lovely Infant in the manger was soon spread. Some walked eight, others fifteen miles to witness the wonder, though nothing could be more simple—a solitary lamp lighted the poor dwelling, and many tears were shed when contemplating the poverty of our Infant Saviour. From the devout adorations and aspirations of love, you could have thought the people were assembled around the real Crib. I felt grateful to God for affording us an opportunity of enlivening the faith and devotion of so many towards the mystery of divine love.'

Mother Mary Benedicta governed the community at Gorey for twelve years, gradually, as it seems, wearing down her strength in the service of her Master. Her sister, who had shared her years of orphaned youth, and had also entered the Institute, was then Superior at the convent in Dublin, at George's-street. It was on the feast of this sister's patroness, St. Scholastica, 1854, that Mother Mary Benedicta received the summons to prepare for her approaching death. A violent attack of hemorrhage came on when she was alone in her cell. A Sister entered casually, and found her extremely weak, but she simply desired that, when the lecture on which

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the community was then engaged was over, the infirmarian might be sent to her if she was disengaged. She was removed for a short time to Dublin, where her sister was Superior, but neither the change of air nor the advice of the best doctors seemed of any avail, and she soon returned to her convent to die in the midst of her work. She lingered till the Feast of St. Michael, in September, and then passed away.

When her body was taken into the church, it became manifest that the devotion and gratitude of the faithful people were ready almost to canonise her. A very heavy rain prevented the burial for some days, and during the interval the church was constantly crowded. The mourning was universal. She had been in the habit of touching the sick who came to her with a relic of the true cross, and very many cures were attributed to this. At the moment of her death she seems to have appeared to a lady in Paris, as yet a Protestant, for whose conversion she had long been praying. The incident is attested by a letter from the lady herself, and is too remarkable to be passed over in silence.

'I will strive to put on paper,' writes the lady in question, 'the vision with which my weak and wavering mind was fortified, and whereby strength

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and confidence were given me to take that step for which, during eternity, I shall love God and return thanks to Him.

'I saw the first three steps of an altar or great throne. I saw a figure kneeling before the altar, praying fervently and clothed in a long white dress, yet I knew it was meant for me, and I said, "That is I." I then heard the soft peculiar voice of dear Mrs. Somers say, "It is no use to look at the cross, and admire its beauties; if you cannot take it up and embrace it, you will get no nearer to Christ. Pray for strength to do that which you know to be right." These last words were repeated two or three times.

'I awoke and related my dream, adding, I feel I must have been praying all night, for now I have strength, now I feel at peace.' In this mystic dream, it was also made known to this favoured soul that a certain priest was the person decreed by heaven to assist her in crossing the gulf that separated her soul from the true Church. She therefore stated, 'I shall not seek a priest, for I know one will be brought to me and that before Christmas. When I see the right priest I shall know him, and whether it be in a church or in a street, I shall address him at once. And so it was. In a short time the lady

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recognised the identical clergyman in the renowned Father de Ravignan, S.J. She continues: 'In a few days after my vision, I had a letter from Gorey, telling me of the death of dear Mrs. Somers. I knew how long she had in her charity prayed for me and mine, and I instantly felt that the wonderful increase of grace sent me was due to the prayers of the holy soul on the day of her death. I am confident, without being told it, that her prayers were offered for others in our country, who are now in the true fold.

'I told Père de Ravignan that he has twenty-one children in the county Wexford, and this all in one year. . . I could not resist the pleasure of giving the name of Benedicta to my little girl, now one month old. May our dear Mother Benedicta watch over her and give her some of her saintly qualities.'

The year before this conversion, Mother Benedicta was instrumental in bringing about another conversion, this time of a Protestant clergyman, by means of her devotion to the Immaculate Conception of Our Blessed Lady. This gentleman had visited the convent at Gorey, in the first week in December, 1854, when the nuns were beginning the Novena of the Imma-

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culate Conception—the dogma concerning which mystery was to be defined by Pius IX on the feast itself. He was not much inclined to yield his assent when Mother Mary Benedicta presented him with a miraculous medal, begging him to wear it, and with a little book of devotions for the Novena, begging him to use it. The result is related in a letter from the gentleman himself to Mother Mary Benedicta. It is dated in the February of the following year:—

'You will, I know,' he says, 'rejoice to hear that your prayers in my poor behalf have been most abundantly answered, and that I am now one with you in the fellowship of Christ and the communion of the saints. You will remember what a hesitating assent I gave to your proposal to join you in your pious Novena of the Immaculate Conception of Our Blessed Lady, and how I all but refused to wear her medal. I did, however, wear it, and she herself has entered into my heart. May she continue there till I behold her glorious face in heaven.

'Within the octave of that great and memorable festival, I was received into the communion of the holy Church, the only Church where she is honoured, and consequently the only one whose members are entitled to the benefit of her all-

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prevailing intercession.' The same good priest, as he afterwards became, wrote to her from Rome begging a continuance of her prayers for himself and others.

We have lingered a little over this account of Mother Mary Benedicta, as she seems to deserve a place by the side of the other early members of the Institute of whom we have already spoken. We may now interrupt for a time the narrative of the progress of the Institute in Ireland, in order to mention what was going on at the same time with the new foundations at Dalkey and Gorey, that is, the extension of the field of usefulness of the Sisters to foreign countries and the English possessions abroad.

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CHAPTER X.

The Institute in India.

WHEREVER the Catholic Church plants her foot, and is able to undertake the permanent mission of evangelizing heathen nations by forming them into Christian societies, the necessity of educational institutions is one of the first points to be forced upon the minds of the bishops or others who may be charged with the great work for souls. In a society already partially Christian, however high may be its standard of civilization and intellectual cultivation, it becomes at once manifest that the training of the young in all wholesome and useful learning is a work that cannot be expected at the hands of the pastors themselves, and that it cannot, on the other hand, be safely left, even as to those departments of knowledge which are less directly connected with religion, to the care of teachers outside the Church. Thus, one of the most urgent needs which press on the anxious minds of those who

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have to give an account for the souls of a population in which Christianity or Catholicism is making its way, must always be the providing of good, religious teachers for the young of that population; and it is usually, as a matter of course, the religious Orders or Institutes devoted to education to whom recourse in the first instance is made. The founders of an Institute in Ireland such as that of the Blessed Virgin, scanty as were their own numbers in comparison to the copious harvest which invited and repaid their toil in their own country, could not expect long to be left without solicitations for help from distant lands, where their name might have become known, and where a large field was sure to open itself to their zeal and devotion. The education of the young is an essential part of the great missionary work which, in each successive generation, our Lord expects from His Church. Never yet has the generation of the Church been known in which this work has not been imposed upon her, in which she has not answered the appeal, and in which she has not found it difficult to meet the demand with an adequate and abundant supply. Teaching Orders may sometimes crowd on one another to an unfortunate degree in particular countries, from particular

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circumstances; but the whole educational forces of the Church, when judiciously distributed, would never, perhaps, quite correspond to the wants of the Christian population of the world.

In the year 1841, the Congregation of which Mary Teresa was the head, received its first call to this missionary work beyond the shores of Ireland. It came from a part of the world by no means the most inviting to any souls save such as seek above everything the privilege of spending and being spent in the service of their Divine Master. The cause of education and of religion in general had suffered most fatally in India from the suppression of the Society of Jesus in the latter half of the eighteenth century. It is not our business here to describe the terrible effects of that suppression on the prospects of the Catholic Church in the East Indies, nor to chronicle the gallant efforts that were made to supply the place of the teachers so arbitrarily torn from the work, just at the time when to interrupt it was to sacrifice the only human hopes of converting India into the home of a cluster of flourishing Catholic churches, which might by this time, perhaps, have become almost independent of European aid for their clergy or their educators. It is enough to say that at the time

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when the appeal was made to the Nuns of Loretto, as they were then generally called, the state of the Catholic population in Bengal was most pitiable, especially on account of its destitution in respect of female education of all classes. There was no inconsiderable demand for this education, especially for the orphans of Catholic soldiers, and for the children of convert natives. The immense pecuniary resources at the command of Protestant societies of every denomination, and of more than one nation, were freely used, chiefly, indeed, for the support of the large army of hungry 'missionaries' of various kinds, for whose benefit those societies principally exist, but also, to no small extent, for the perversion of Catholic children. It was under these circumstances that Dr. Carew, the Vicar-Apostolic of Western Bengal, determined, with the aid of a ladies' committee which had been formed for the purpose, to send a deputation to Rathfarnham, soliciting the aid of the congregation of Loretto. The deputation consisted of a Jesuit Father, Father Robert Haly, and a German priest, the Rev. Dr. Backhaus.

They arrived at Rathfarnham in February, 1841. The history of this application is that of many similar demands on the charity and self-

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sacrifice of religious persons, who are always ready to listen to the dictates of prudence, and then equally willing on further pressure to disregard them, for fear of interfering with the designs of God. Mary Teresa at first recommended the proposal in her own heart to God, and then met it with a decided refusal. The calls on the Institute in Ireland were too great; the distance which would separate her from her children, if they were to go to India, would preclude her from helping them by her guidance and authority; and, besides, the climate of India was sure soon to make havoc among their ranks. Dr. Backhaus was about to take his leave, when he determined to make one last effort. He turned to Mary Teresa, and asked her if she would be responsible for the souls of all those poor heathens whom she was refusing to provide with the instruction which they so urgently needed. She hesitated, and begged him to leave her alone with God for half an hour. When this time was over, she returned to him, saying that he might, if he wished, speak to the community and see if he could persuade any of them to volunteer for the work which he had so much at heart. The battle was won at once. The number of volunteers was greatly in excess of

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the requirements of the Bengal mission. Seven were selected, and Mother Delphina Hart was placed at their head as superior. They were also joined by six postulants. They left Kingstown on August 23rd, Mary Teresa, who had accompanied them from Rathfarnham, watching with tearful eyes from a tower in the grounds of the convent at Bullock Castle the vessel as it receded in the distance. The Sisters of Mercy at Bermondsey entertained the nuns for a week before their final embarkation on board the *Scotia*, the captain of which vessel, Captain Campbell, showed them every possible kindness and attention during the voyage, which lasted four months, till December 30th, when they cast anchor opposite Calcutta. The regular hours of community life were kept, as far as possible, during the voyage, and the nuns had a cabin to themselves for the constant celebration of the Holy Sacrifice.

We must allow the chronicler of Loretto herself to relate the beginnings of the work of the Sisters in Calcutta :—

> Dr. Backhaus immediately waited on the Bishop, and it was agreed that the nuns should not land until half-past four o'clock p.m. next day, as the Catholic community had then been invited to receive them.

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Long before the appointed hour, the bank of the river was crowded with spectators, rich and poor, Europeans and natives, all eager to witness the novelty of the first visit of nuns to the shores of Bengal. The strand was thronged with the people of rank, and conspicuous among them was the Governor-General, Lord Auckland, attended by his suite. At five in the afternoon the Sisters landed, accompanied by the Right Rev. Dr. Oliffe and Dr. Backhaus. They were received by the Vicar-Apostolic of Ava, a large party of the Jesuit Fathers, and secular priests, as well as the ladies of the Convent Committee, who had undertaken the charge of the temporalities of the new establishment. The nuns immediately entered the carriages prepared for them and proceeded to the cathedral, where the Rev. Dr. Carew awaited them; the choir entoned the *Magnificat*, and the bishop, ascending the pulpit, delivered a most soul-stirring discourse. Dr. Carew's oratorical powers were of the first order, and on this occasion we may easily conceive that every word sank deeply into the minds of his hearers and awoke a responsive chord in the hearts of those who were henceforth to be his devoted children and the willing instruments of his mighty plans for the salvation of souls. He closed his impressive discourse by exclaiming with touching earnestness:—

'O holy Church, Spouse of the Lamb, true Jerusalem of the living God, city of peace, of justice, and of mercy, may my right hand be forgotten when I cease to love thee, who hast consecrated the ministers of thy altar to unspotted chastity

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that they might become without division of hearts, the fathers of thy people! thee, who hast also consecrated thy maidens in the bloom of youth to holy virginity, that they may become mothers to the little ones of Christ; that they may, by their example, by their instructions, by their tender solicitude, prove that they love them for the sake of Him whom they have chosen for the portion of their inheritance. Rejoice, then, ye little ones of Christ, for the blessing which heaven this day sends among you! Rejoice, ye pious mothers, for now you have for co-operators, in your sacred duties, holy souls who will share all the joys and sorrows that, as mothers it is your lot to know. Rejoice, all ye people of God, for you receive among you a sisterhood who will never cease in prayer for you, supplicating God to pour down His choicest blessings on the land of their adoption, and on those for whom they have rent asunder the tenderest and strongest ties of human feeling.'

When the preacher paused, the *Te Deum* resounded through the lofty church, and the sisters set out for their future home, which was situated in one of the most aristocratic parts of the 'city of palaces,' and arranged in a style of magnificence that showed more evidently the generosity of the zealous founders than the correctness of their views regarding religious poverty.

A handsome church was in the course of erection on the convent grounds; on the Epistle-side of the altar was a choir allotted to the nuns, fronted by screens of brass lattice work; above this was the

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young ladies' chapel. His Holiness, Pope Gregory XVI., gave £400 to purchase a peal of bells for this church, to which he also confided the blessed relics of St. Benignus.

On reaching the cloister, the nuns were conducted into a saloon, one hundred feet long and brilliantly illuminated, where a respectful welcome greeted them from many ladies, both Catholic and Protestant. Words cannot tell the exceeding kindness of the venerable bishop, of the Jesuit Fathers, and the numerous friends who hailed their arrival in the Eastern world, and it is a pleasing duty to record the unlimited generosity and devoted services of the family of the munificent Count John Lackerston, who, with his two brothers, have ever proved themselves the firmest supporters of religion in Calcutta and the greatest benefactors to our several convents in India. They gave a large portion of their princely fortune for the foundation of one convent area, and have ever been our sincere friends.

Human aid and sympathy were not wanting to our sisters; but bright as their prospects seemed, they felt that if they were marked with the seal of the Lamb, the Cross would be their portion, and that through suffering and much labour alone could they follow Him who "had not whereon to lay His Head." With anxious eye they beheld the luxury that surrounded them, the eager friends who left no wants unsupplied, and they sighed for the time when all this would give place to the simplicity and the retirement of the cloister; yet, it was only gradually that they succeeded in putting away the

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pomp and splendour of their house, to give it the appearance of a convent.

The morning after their arrival they were visited by the Procurator of the Jesuits' College, with many kind offers of all the services in his power. Nor was this the only act of thoughtful consideration that our sisters experienced from the Fathers of the Society. They were steadfast friends, incessantly affording spiritual and temporal assistance until their lamented departure from Bengal in 1846. They returned to Calcutta in November, 1859, and resumed the instruction of the Catholic youth of Bengal, which, from the time of their departure, had been in the hands of secular priests. Their college, under the patronage of St. Francis Xavier, ranks above every other establishment in the city.

An address, signed by Dr. Carew, the clergy, and the principal inhabitants of Calcutta, was forwarded to the Archbishop of Dublin, expressing their deep gratitude for his timely aid in allowing the sisters to leave his own vicariate for their distant mission.

The good and holy Bishop lost no time in accomplishing the object of his desires. On the 10th January, 1842, the schools opened and pupils crowded in on the zealous teachers, who also attended a poor-school attached to the cathedral. Subsequently a day-school for the middle classes was opened, in order to meet the wishes of those parents who were desirous to have their children instructed by the nuns, but could not afford the advantage of the first-class education imparted at Loretto House.

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In May, 1842, His Excellency the Governor of Chandernagore, a French colony about thirty miles from Calcutta, expressed a wish to establish there a convent of our Institute.

The Bishop at once accepted the proposal. Chandernagore is situated on the right bank of the river Hoogly, and boasts of a number of elegantly constructed buildings, conspicuous among them is the convent with its pretty church, originally dedicated to Our Lady of Loretto, both having been built some years before by Italian missionaries of the Order of St. Francis. Circumstances had obliged the priests to leave this monastery; accordingly the venerable superior of the Capuchins, Dr. Borghi, Vicar-Apostolic of Agra, gladly transferred both church and convent to Dr. Carew, who immediately desired Mother M. Delphina Hart to select members for the new foundation.

The toil of the sisters daily increased, and of the little band only six were professed, the remainder consisted of postulants—willing, generous souls, it is true, but as yet uninstructed in the government and training of youth. Little wonder then that Mother M. Delphina implored the Bishop to defer the projected establishment until the schools in Calcutta rested on a more secure foundation. The entreaty was made in vain, for Dr. Carew, amongst other considerations, urged that the health of the sisters would be benefited by their removal to the lovely district of Chandernagore, a country smiling with verdure and richly adorned with the gorgeous Eastern trees.

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In July, 1842, Mother Mary Delphina, Sister Mary Alexia Egan, and Sister Mary Benigna Egan, accompanied by the lay-sister, Veronica Fox, already mentioned, proceeded to the new filiation The Governor's daughter, Mademoiselle St. Hilaire, was their first pupil, when school opened in August. The following October, the orphanage was transferred from Calcutta to Chandernagore, and arrangements were made for the admission, not only of destitute children, but of others whose parents could afford a moderate allowance for their support. Hundreds of Catholic orphans had been placed in the public schools of Calcutta, where they were soon seduced from the faith of their parents; but this work, undertaken by our sisters, has been richly blessed by heaven in favour of the homeless little ones. With no established funds for its support, the Loretto Orphanage has prospered beneath the eye of the Father of the fatherless.

Many were the proofs they experienced of the paternal care of Divine Providence, but none was more striking than the following : The poor orphans were reduced to the greatest distress for food and clothing. Donations and subscriptions had almost ceased, with difficulty were the nuns able to provide them with the common necessaries of life. Serious thoughts were entertained of dispersing the little ones, and of abandoning the idea of an orphanage, until some settled funds could be established for its support. But there was One above, who saw these struggles and knew well how to send both comfort and relief when all seemed hopeless. The

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Protestant magistrate of Futtehpore, a station hundreds of miles distant, deposited a large sum of money in the hands of Mr. Shaw, a recent convert, to be applied to any charitable purpose he thought fit. The gentleman having some knowledge of our Orphanage, recommended it to his Protestant friend, who from that time regularly transmitted to us every month from £130 to £160, just sufficient with the other resources to meet the expenses of the large Orphanage.

This kind benefactor, Mr. Robert Tudor Tucker, met with a tragical end in the mutiny of 1857. He kept up a correspondence with Mother Mary Delphina on religious subjects, and before his death was anxious to become a Catholic, but had no opportunity of being regularly received into the Church.

This sad outbreak greatly increased the number of orphans, who were brought down to Calcutta in hundreds; the nuns gladly received their share, and though they had lost the kind benefactor of their helpless little ones, yet the Father of the orphan sent still sufficient to feed and clothe those poor destitute children.

Many of the orphans were brought from the wayside by some chance passer-by, who knew that the nuns were ready to receive them. A lady who confided to Mother Mary Delphina, a little pagan of six, told her story as follows: The child had been left an orphan at that tender age, and while she was herself in sore need of parental love and care, she found that a baby sister was to be her charge. For some time she nursed and watched the infant with

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patient assiduity, but the little untaught creature grew very weary of the task, and yielding to the suggestions of a wicked woman, she threw the baby into a well. Next day the baby was seen floating on the water, and the poor sister was brought before the magistrates. Young as she was, the light of reason had come to her, for she had been trying to hide, lest her crime should be discovered. With our sisters she found a home, happiness, and faith.

Another child, about seven years of age, was sent to the Orphanage by her pagan parents. She was baptized, attended school, and learned many hymns and prayers. After some time, the mother took her back to her native village, but the spirit of the martyrs had descended on the blessed little one. The parents promised and threatened, they tortured the little form, so helpless in their cruel hands, but with unchildlike courage, she sang the hymns, and uttered with greater fervour the prayers that the Christians offered to the white man's God. Conquered at last, the persecutors restored our child, sanctified by the fiery ordeal of the Cross.

A pagan named Hirra, having lost two of his children in infancy, resolved to appeal to the God of the Christians for the preservation of his third infant. He made a promise that if the boy lived to a certain age, he would give a feast to the Catholic orphans. True to his pledge, Hirra came at the appointed time, laden with sweetmeats, which he first carried to the chapel, and offered them with many 'salaams' to the God of the Christians. This man's mother had the reputation of being a great saint

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among the Hindoos, who revered her for leading a strictly moral life, abstaining from fish and flesh, and giving all her earnings to the poor. She died within the convent enclosure. Her body was laid out in great state on a charpony or native bed, decorated with flowers and festooned with scarlet drapery. A band of native musicians accompanied the remains to the 'sacred' grave. One of the sisters asked a pagan servant the reason for these extraordinary ceremonies, and was highly amused at his grave answer: "Because she was a holy beggar like yourself."

The miraculous medal has often been a powerful instrument in the hands of the nuns for effecting the conversion of the elder native children. A poor Mahometan girl, aged sixteen, was entrusted to our sisters by a Catholic family. When the novelty of her new position lost its attraction, she became discontented, and made several attempts to escape. After an ineffectual search for a safe asylum for their afflicted charge, the nuns placed her under the special protection of Mary, by investing her with the miraculous medal. A change came over her at once, she was calm and subdued, and the work of grace was completed by witnessing the rather sudden death of one of her companions. Terrified at the thought of the judgment to come, she begged for baptism, and from that day, she has proved herself a sincere convert and a devoted child of Loretto.

Another little girl about eight years old, although dying, obstinately refused to receive baptism. Finding all reasoning ineffectual, the attendant sister

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fastened a miraculous medal round the child's neck, imploring the Immaculate Queen of Heaven to intercede for the soul now about to appear before the dread judgment-seat. Not long after, she fell into her last agony, but our blessed Mother had interceded, and grace touching her heart, the dying child called out for baptism, which the sister had scarcely time to administer, when the little one breathed her last.

But we must return from these details of the history of the Orphanage to the general account of the Indian Mission of the sisters. The year 1842 was a memorable one for the Indian Mission. The blessing of the Church of St. Thomas assembled a number of ecclesiastics of every nation, within the walls of Loretto. Ireland, England, France, Spain, Germany, Greece, Italy, Arabia, even China, sent representatives to honour the consecration of the Temple, placed under the protection of Judea's great Apostle.

The first victim of the Institute in India was soon called. Sister Mary Xaveria M'Donough was preparing with angelic fervour for the reception of our holy habit; her bridal dress was prepared, her veil and habit awaited the blessing of the anointed minister of God, when heaven sent its messenger. The bright young spirit was consumed with the agony attendant on brain fever and a few days of intense suffering perfected the sacrifice of the willing victim. Sister Mary Xaveria was a fervent, generous soul, full of zeal for the glory of God, and burning to sacrifice herself for the good

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of the little ones of India. Great were the anticipations of her future holiness; but God, to whom she had consecrated her young life, accepted the ardent desires of her heart, and before they could be realised called her to Himself. Shortly before her death, she asked permission to make a general confession before all assembled; her request being denied, she begged of them to leave her alone, without drink or any assistance, the more closely to resemble her dying Saviour. After having received the last Sacraments, she calmly expired at midnight on the 6th September, 1842. Her sorrowing sisters laid her to rest in St. Thomas' Church, clothed in the religious habit which she had so ardently desired.

The first reception of nuns in Bengal took place on the Feast of Our Lady's Nativity. Four postulants were clothed by the Bishop, while all ranks and creeds were united in witnessing the ceremony.

On the 11th of the following November a dreadful earthquake shook Calcutta to its foundations. The Convent rocked fearfully, and the nuns, expecting instant death, hastened to the Oratory, and together recited the Litany of Jesus, calling on our Lord once more to exert His power over nature. The providence of God watched over the city, and it was saved from destruction.

Towards the close of 1842, Mary Teresa received another appeal from the Indian shores, for "the harvest was great and the labourers few." Fourteen generous souls responded to the call, and were conducted by the Right Rev. Dr. Oliffe to Calcutta. Owing to this timely aid, another filiation was

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established at Serampore, a small town of a Dutch settlement, chiefly inhabited by Baptists. Serampore was of great use as a Sanatorium for the nuns, who were sinking beneath the influence of an uncongenial atmosphere.

Since their arrival sickness had been doing its work, and at last the dreaded epidemic—cholera—made its way into the Convent. The Mistress of Schools Sister M. Martina M'Cann, expired after a few hours of excruciating agony. She was a true religious and an invaluable teacher, and it was with sad hearts that the Community saw her place among them left vacant.

At this time Mother M. Delphina received a young German lady to assist in the schools, in compliance with the request of a pious friend, who hoped that the foreigner would find the true Faith, for which she earnestly sought, through the instrumentality of our Sisters. One day of reflection and prayer was all that Providence granted to her, for in less than twenty-four hours she was attacked by that fatal disease—cholera. To the unspeakable consolation of the nuns, the Jesuit Father who was summoned to her bedside found her well disposed for the passage to eternity. He lost no time in admitting her into the true Fold, and as the last rites concluded, her happy soul was released from its earthly prison.

Not long after the arrival of our Sisters in India, the female wards of the General Hospital were confided to their care, under the special superintendence of our Mother M. Joseph Hogan. Disappointment awaited them here, for although they could contribute

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much to the temporal comfort of the patients, little could be done for their spiritual welfare. The Pagans would not listen to the teachings of a religion which from early childhood they had learned to hate and scorn; therefore, after two years of almost fruitless exertions, the nuns were obliged to discontinue this work of charity, and devote all their time and energy to the training of the young.

The 3rd December, 1844, the Feast of the Apostle of India, was honoured by the first Religious Profession in Calcutta.

A few months later a severe loss was sustained in the death of Sister Veronica Fox. This holy lay-sister had begun her mission even during the voyage to India, by giving daily instructions to the soldiers' wives, with all the zeal of an Alphonsus Rodriquez. On her arrival in Calcutta she devoted herself to a life of unremitting labour, sanctified by continual prayer. So edifying was her religious modesty, that while she was Portress seculars often visited the Convent, solely for the purpose of seeing "the good Sister Veronica," and of hearing from her a few heartfelt words of love and trust in God. She had an extraordinary devotion to the Passion, and often shed abundant tears while meditating on it. Truly maternal was her charity towards the lay-novices and postulants. She consoled and encouraged them when wearied nature shrank from the trials of these first years in a foreign land. Therefore was her lamp trimmed and ready for the coming of the Bridegroom, and when informed that her hour was come, she expressed her willing acceptance of

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death by the fervent words: "Thank God, I am ready; my life has been one long preparation for this hour."

In the year 1845, the district of Eastern Bengal was confided to the care of the Right Rev. Dr. Oliffe, whose first care was to establish an Orphanage and Schools in Chittagong. For this purpose he asked and obtained three of our members. The number of pupils in the Boarding and Day-School averaged only thirty, as the European inhabitants were few, and the poverty of the other Christians rendered it impossible for them to give even a small sum for the tuition of their children. However, there was a large field for labour in the Orphanage and Free-School, to which about eighty poor little ones daily resorted. As may be imagined, privations were not unknown to the nuns and their helpless wards; yet the Providence of God never failed to support them, until the year 1854, when Chittagong and its dependent districts were transferred to the French Congregation of La Sainte Croix; and as the priests of that society always laboured conjointly with nuns of their own Institute who accompanied them, our Sisters were directed by Dr. Oliffe to proceed to Dacca, where a branch-house had been established by Mother M. Alexia Egan, who ended there her holy life, worn out by toil in the service of God. She was one of the first band of missioners, and truly brought with her and preserved the spirit of the Mother House. The Sisters at Dacca were happy under her gentle and prudent government: she shared their labours, cheered them in hours of dis-

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couragement by her own example and animating words, and was to her last hour an accomplished model of a true religious of our holy Institute. She was succeeded by her sister, M. M. Benigna Egan.

Dacca is a populous town, surrounded by many natural beauties; but the residents being almost all Protestants, our sisters had many an anxious day, until the want of secular priests for this portion of his flock obliged Dr. Oliffe to resign it to the care of the congregation of St. Croix, leaving the Loretto community free to return to Calcutta.

Gratitude obliges us to mention the name of a true friend and consoler in these hours of trial, Rev. Augustus Goiran, whose untiring exertions were never wanting during the arduous mission in Eastern Bengal to stimulate the fervour of our generous and heroic sisters.

In 1846, three of our sisters, chosen by Dr. Carew, proceeded to found a convent in Darjeeling, on the Sikhim range of the lofty Himalayas. The ascent of the station in these days was perilous and wearisome, but the beautiful situation amongst the loveliest scenery of these mountain wilds and the delightful European climate, so well suited to restore the health of our invalids, determined the choice of the wise and fatherly prelate.

It was soon discovered that Darjeeling belonged to the Vicariate of Patna, then administered by the Right Rev. Dr. Hartmann, at whose special request Mother Mary Joseph Hogan devoted herself to the service of the new foundation. From the time of her arrival in Darjeeling the prosperity of that

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Loretto may be dated. A new convent and chapel were built, and the schools considerably enlarged. In 1853, Mother M. Joseph revisited Ireland, in search of assistants for her loved mission, and the same year witnessed her happy return, accompanied by a large party of novices and postulants. Darjeeling Convent is now the residence of over thirty nuns and about fifty pupils. Mother Mary Joseph repeated her visit in 1876, and with the same happy result. She is still superioress, and for her energy, her devotion, and her talent, may be called the head and heart of her mountain home.

Two objects now engrossed the attention of the good Archbishop, Dr. Carew. He earnestly wished for a convent boarding-school for the middle classes, and an Orphanage less remote than that of Chandernagore. Both these desires were fulfilled when he secured two houses, with extensive grounds in a pretty suburb of Calcutta, called Intally. March, 1847, saw the school and Orphanage opened, they have increased and prospered, and much good has thus been effected among the poorer classes.

Very sweet and consoling were the deaths of some of the fatherless and motherless babes who found a shelter in Loretto. One of the little natives, aged three years, cried out in her own language, "I am dying, but I am going to God." A pagan woman, standing by, exclaimed, "What sort of a place is this, where even infants speak of God?"

A girl of fourteen spent the last moments of her life in endeavouring to win the soul of her mother by prayer, and faintly uttered words of fond entreaty;

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and here again, at the closing scene, the blessed image of Mary exerted its victorious sway. Hearts, closed to every human counsel, opened to grace at the touch of the medal, so justly named 'miraculous,' and the gentle hand of our Mother Mary led the wandering lamb to the Fold of the one true Shepherd.

Later on two asylums were founded for distressed females and young children, of which the nuns willingly consented to take charge, seeing in this work of charity a precious opportunity of winning many souls for heaven. It was the special object of the sisters' care that none of these poor creatures should die without Baptism. Great caution, however, was necessary in giving it, as the Asylum was chiefly supported by wealthy Hindoos, and the nuns were expected not to interfere in religion. The sufferings of these poor creatures softened and prepared their hearts for the reception of Divine grace, and the affectionate devotion with which the sisters waited on them won an attentive hearing whenever they could venture to touch on religious subjects, and a ready acceptance of Baptism at the hour of death. As the place was surrounded by pagan servants and native doctors, the nuns had to make use of stratagem when about to administer Baptism. The superioress in her daily visits to the Asylum, carried with her a basket, containing, among other things, two bottles of equal size, one full of Eau-de-Cologne, the other of water for Baptism. Whilst with one hand she cooled the head of the dying patient, with the other she poured on her the water of regeneration. This

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laving of the head and the mysterious words by which it was accompanied, were considered by the natives as a blessing, so when the good mother appeared at the Asylum, she was often surrounded by a crowd of women, who with the greatest eagerness brought their children to receive the mystic blessing, little thinking that it was a blessing that could be given but once, and which numbered their unconscious little ones among the children of the true God. Mother Mary Delphina, writing to Rev. Mother an account of the labours of her zealous community, says:—'I could not count the number of young Blacks bought, baptised, and now gone to heaven. The Intally Orphanage has almost adorned a part of heaven with *jet* ornaments. Lately at Tittaghur, we had about ten baptisms in one week. On our Blessed Lady's feast we had four heathens and three Protestants baptised, all children from our free school.'

Some time after she again writes:—'Our good God gave us an opportunity of saving about one hundred and fifty heathens, by Baptism privately administered. This great grace was given to us while in charge of the poor famine-stricken women and children. Three or four died daily; you may be sure we left nothing undone to save these poor creatures. One of them, after instruction and Baptism, thought she could never hear enough about God, and would constantly cry out, "Sister, come and speak to me again of God."'

A Mormon lady, her four children and niece, after receiving a course of instruction from our Sisters,

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abjured the false religion and embraced the one true Faith.

Our Sisters' efforts also obtained the light of Faith about the same time for a native lady of rank and her daughter, also two gentlemen, a doctor, and a captain. Very lately seven Protestant pupils received Baptism, also one Armenian.

Eight converts who had been educated and received the light of Faith through the instrumentality of our Sisters, entered the novitiate, and, with the exception of one, all persevered in the fervent exercises of the religious life.

In the midst of all these toils for the saving of souls, God called to Himself a truly zealous labourer. She was also one of the most edifying and useful members of the community, and had attained no ordinary degree of holiness; her life was one continued succession of Divine interposition. Mother Mary Teresa Harper was born a Protestant and remained such until the age of 26, but even at this period she was a model of purity, piety, and self-abnegation. With a young companion she rose regularly at night to pray, and practised severe mortifications. So firmly was she persuaded of the 'corruptions of Romanism,' that when she heard our convent was to be established in Calcutta, she immediately fell upon her knees and begged of God in His mercy to preserve the city from such a misfortune. Little did she then think that God had destined her to train many novices in that very community and to win many souls to Catholicity. In the course of her reading, Miss Harper chanced to

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meet the Oxford Tracts for the Times; she became deeply interested, and went heart and soul into the controversy. She followed Dr. Newman's arguments step by step, and when conviction drew him into the bosom of the true Church, she experienced an irresistible desire to share his happiness. She had no means whatever of obtaining the assistance of a priest, but she prayed earnestly to St. Peter to obtain for her the grace she so much desired. Not long after she accidentally met a Jesuit, the Rev. F. Peniston, a man whose wisdom and sanctity rendered him a most efficient guide for such a soul. He found her prepared, and at once received her into the Church. So intense was the joy, so deep the gratitude of the new convert, that she resolved to consecrate herself unreservedly to God in that very convent whose establishment she had so much dreaded. After a few months she was admitted as a postulant, and her progress in the spiritual life was rapid. The Blessed Sacrament became the centre of all her thoughts and affections, and so engrossed her whole being that she found it very difficult to apply to teaching and the other exterior works of our holy vocation. However, on account of her varied talents and her wonderful influence over children, she was almost constantly employed in the school. She accepted these duties without allowing herself a desire contrary to obedience. By nature she was proud, passionate, and impatient of subjection, yet she humbled herself with the simplicity of a child, and it required close observation to discover that her humility and meekness were only preserved by habitual self-control and constant prayer.

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Some years after her profession she was appointed Mistress of Schools, in which office the children loved and venerated her as a saint. After some time she was charged with the care of the novices. In this office her mortification and regular exactness to all duties, through suffering much, were a continual instruction to her young disciples. She neglected nothing in order to form them to St. Ignatius' grand motto, '*Abnegat semetipsum.*' Being herself intimately united to God, she possessed a peculiar power of leading others to Him.

After fulfilling her duties of Novice Mistress for about a year and a half she was called to receive her crown. To the end she continued a model of fervour, patience, and fidelity to rule. There were but six novices at the time of her death, she bade them be of good cheer, for that soon their number would increase; the following year the novices amounted to twenty-five, and ever since the novitiate has continued to flourish.

On the Feast of All Souls, 1855, the Indian Mission sustained an irreparable loss, the learned and saintly Dr. Carew went to receive the reward of a life entirely devoted to God and the salvation of souls. Deep and universal was the grief, for this zealous pastor was beloved by all, Catholic and Protestant, Hindoo, Mahometan, and Jew, for he was a devoted prelate, a friend to the friendless, and a guide and a benefactor to all. His means and the energies of his great mind were devoted to the moral and social improvement of his flock. He spared no personal exertion, shrank from no sacrifice when souls were in question; he went about confirming the doubtful,

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reclaiming the perverted, and infusing the genial spirit of religion into all. After his death, the Protestant papers teemed with his praises. A subscription was raised, called the Carew Fund, for the support of the Catholic orphanages, to which many Protestants contributed most liberally. The following month the late Archbishop's Coadjutor, Dr. Oliffe, took possession of the vacant see with the usual ceremonies.

Besides the plague, famine, and earthquake, Bengal was also visited by the terrible cyclone. In Calcutta and its environs about one thousand and sixteen people were killed, and on the Hoogly alone four hundred and twenty-four were drowned. Our convents, thank God, escaped with very little injury. The sufferings of the poor people after these visitations are fearful, as they are almost bereft of human assistance. Our Sisters exerted themselves to the utmost for the relief of the sufferers. In their simplicity and childlike confidence, the poor natives believe the nuns to be invested with superhuman power to comfort and to heal, and they have thus many opportunities of winning souls to God. This unhappy country of Bengal, though so blessed by nature, seems destined to endure one visitation after another, perhaps in order to obtain for its poor suffering children the grace of conversion to Christianity.

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CHAPTER XI.

Missions in the Mauritius, Gibraltar, Bombay, and Cadiz.

It was almost inevitable that the step which it had cost Mary Teresa so much to take in favour of the educational needs of Bengal should have to be repeated as to other parts of the British empire. Our colonial bishops naturally look to Ireland as their best hope for such assistance as their dioceses require, and the nuns of Loretto were now the most conspicuous teaching Order for ladies and girls in Ireland. It is not, therefore, surprising that the Irish branch of the Institute of the Blessed Virgin should have surpassed all others in its spread into foreign and distant countries—though this kind of fertility is by no means wanting to the German stock of the same Institute. The English dominions alone contain an immense proportion of the foreign missions of the Catholic Church; and in all educational work, as also in the work of the Christian ministry itself, the English tongue is almost essential everywhere within those dominions. We need not linger long over the missions of which we are

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to speak in the present chapter, but a few words are necessary in the life of the Foundress of Rathfarnham, concerning the exertions of her children in the Mauritius, Gibraltar, Bombay, and Cadiz.

It seems to have been the reputation acquired by the Sisters in Bengal that induced Dr. Collier, then Vicar-Apostolic of Mauritius, to apply to the Rev. Mother at Rathfarnham for a colony of religious for his own island. The population of the Mauritius, though not absolutely large, was to a considerable extent composed of the descendants of the French colonists, from whom we had wrested the island, and there were there, everywhere, the children of Irish Catholic soldiers and sailors in the British service. The emancipation of the negroes had made the importation of Hindu coolies necessary, and it was hoped that many of these poor pagans might be won from their superstition and sensuality to the pure religion of our Lord, by the exertions of the Sisters. Six choir-nuns and two lay-sisters were sent from Rathfarnham in the summer of 1845, and reached Port Louis, where a fine house in the best part of the town had been secured for them, on the Feast of Our Lady's Nativity, September 8th of the same year. Mother Austin Hearne was their superior. The work of the

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Sisters was of the usual character—a boarding-school for young ladies, a day-school, an orphanage, and large schools for the children of the poor. The mission has continued to flourish both materially and spiritually, though the extreme heat of the climate and the distance from home have always tried the virtue of the religious severely.

The same year saw another small colony of Sisters despatched to Gibraltar—a spot not very inviting in itself, but appealing to the large heart of Mary Teresa, on account of her tender recollections of some of the Spanish girls with whom she had been brought up at the convent at York. The Bishop, Dr. Hughes, was able, by the charity of the Œuvre of the Propagation of the Faith, to secure a nice house in the town, and the Sisters were duly and honourably installed therein, on their arrival, on the Feast of St. Francis Xavier, December 3rd, 1845. The cathedral bells welcomed them, the troops lined the streets as they passed, and the governor came to visit them. However stiff may be the conduct of Government officials to Catholics in England and Ireland, the stiffness usually gives way in the colonies and dependencies of the Crown, where there is no established Protestant

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Church to keep up the traditions of prejudice and hostility. This mission has also prospered, though the circumstances of the population of Gibraltar, which is extremely fluctuating, make the success of one year by no means a certain augury of the success of the next. The climate, also, had its effect of daunting the courage of the first Sisters. The first detachment consisted of three choir nuns and one lay-sister; but of these one was soon obliged to return to her native air, and another soon died. After an interval of ten years from the foundation of the convent, Dr. Hughes was obliged, by ill health, to retire from his see, to die in Ireland. His successor, Dr. Scandella, obtained for the nuns the fine new convent in which they still live, and which is known by the name of 'Our Lady of Europa,' from a miraculous statue of our Blessed Lady, which for a time rested within its walls. 'This image,' says the chronicler of Loretto, 'belonged to a hermit who lived on the rock of Gibraltar, in the early part of the last century. It was placed in a conspicuous position near the sea, and was so much venerated by the mariners, that the Spanish vessels fired a salute of twenty-one guns as they passed it. When the English took Gibraltar, their first act was to insult and

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deface the venerable image. Some pious hands rescued it from total destruction. For many years it was preserved in a noble family at Algesiras, and at last, through the exertions of Dr. Scandella, it was brought back to Gibraltar, and deposited with the nuns. The recovery of this much-prized statue filled the Catholics of the place with joy and confidence. It was celebrated with a solemn triduum and novena, during which great numbers of the people approached the Sacraments. But the good bishop wished still further to extend the veneration of the population, and for this purpose he erected a new and fitting sanctuary for the Blessed Virgin. The shrine was built as near as possible to the site of the old sanctuary, and the statue can now be seen and saluted as before by the passing sailors. When the building was completed, the statue was carried in solemn procession to its new home.'

It was in 1848 that the Bishop of Bombay, Dr. Whelan, applied to Mary Teresa to send him some of her community to undertake at Bombay the work they had so successfully achieved in the eastern parts of Bengal. He had been offered a house and lands, a church provided with vestments, church furniture, and

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plate; and provision was also to be made for a chaplain. Three Sisters, of whom Mother Mary Philomena Frizelle was superior, sailed with the Bishop and two Jesuit Fathers in September, 1848, and arrived at Bombay in the December of the same year. This mission of the Institute had soon to be abandoned. The Sisters laboured successfully enough for between two and three years, and were largely assisted in their difficulties by the Nabob of Surat, and several English merchants; but the climate was very trying, and other circumstances supervened to make the abandonment of the design necessary. In 1851, Mother Mary Philomena was sent, with her community, to join the Sisters at Calcutta, and four years later she was obliged by illness to return to Ireland. This was in 1855, the same year in which the death of Dr. Carew gave a severe blow to the community at Calcutta itself.

In the same year in which the house at Bombay was abandoned, another mission was begun at Cadiz, in Spain, which was also to be short-lived. It was through an Irish lady residing at Cadiz, Teresa Magawly, Countess of Cabry, that the plan of a settlement in that city of the nuns from Rathfarnham came to be attempted. With that zeal which is often found in ladies of her nation,

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she had begun herself the instruction of young persons of her own rank. Thus, when the six Sisters from Rathfarnham arrived at Cadiz they found a school of thirty awaiting their superintendence. The colony had spent some very happy days with their Sisters at Gibraltar, where they had stopped for nearly a fortnight before proceeding to Cadiz. They arrived at that city on November 10th, 1851. The mission flourished considerably for several years, and the nuns had every reason to be satisfied with their reception in Spain, at least as long as their kind friend the Countess lived, which was for two years after the foundation. Twice in the next few years were new Sisters sent to them from Rathfarnham, and it seems to have been more from the political troubles to which the Great Catholic Peninsula is so unfortunately subject, than from any other cause, that the nuns were finally withdrawn in 1856.

During the years which are included in the period over which we have passed lightly in the present chapter, there were other calls for foundations at home and abroad besides those which we have here spoken of. These other invitations had more permanent and striking results, and we must devote to them a separate chapter.

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CHAPTER XII.

Canada.

THE New World has always been a favourite field for the exertions of Irish labourers for our Lord, on account of the large numbers of the natives of Ireland who have been providentially led to make it their home. The first invitation which reached Rathfarnham from anyone in authority in the New Continent came from Dr. Power, the Bishop of Toronto, in Upper Canada. He was appointed to his See in 1845, and in that year he visited Ireland, and communicated to Mary Teresa his desire to see a colony of her spiritual children settled in his episcopal city. It was not till 1847 that the design was carried out. In that year, on the Feast of Our Lady of the Snow, August 5, a small band of five professed Sisters and one novice set out from Kingstown to proceed to America by way of Liverpool. It was noticed that on their way to their ship they met the funeral *cortège* conveying the remains of Daniel O'Connell to his grave in Glasnevin.

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The superior of the little band was Mary Ignatia Hutchinson. She was one of the Community at Dalkey when she volunteered, with others, for this new mission of Canada. As soon as she heard that she was destined for the office of Superior, she shrank from it with so much instinctive repugnance that she felt obliged to beg her own Superior, Mary Conception Lopez, to intercede for her with Mary Teresa that she might be excused from the burden. But Mary Teresa only saw in her reluctance a fresh reason for the appointment. She sent her a message that no mission would be sent to Canada unless she consented to be its head. When told this, she pointed to a pump which was near where she was standing, saying that if God commanded it to speak it would obey, and if He willed her to be Superior, He would give her help to do her duty.

The Sisters of Mercy at Liverpool were the hosts of the Loretto Nuns for the few days of their stay in the city before embarkation. The voyage was made in the sailing vessel 'Garrick,' and seems to have been far less comfortable to the little band of religious women than the voyage of their Sisters to Calcutta, spoken of in a preceding chapter. The annoyance came from

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the rough manners and language of some on board. However, these trials came to an end on September 19, the Feast of the Seven Dolours of Our Blessed Lady, on which day they landed in New York.

This Canadian mission was destined to flourish exceedingly, but its early beginnings were deeply marked by the Cross. The story is simply told by the religious chronicler, and we shall not endeavour to improve on her narrative, except by occasional explanations. They arrived at Toronto, sailing up the Hudson, before the end of September. We shall take up the narrative of the Sisters at this point :—

On landing, the embarrassment of the poor nuns was very great. They knew not where to turn to find the Bishop's palace, and, in their timidity, they feared to ask, till a coloured car-driver offered his services. After much difficulty they succeeded in making him understand where they wished to go. The good Bishop received them with paternal kindness, but his countenance was sad and careworn. The place looked bare and oppressively lonely. It was evidently an abode on which the sun of this world's prosperity had never shone, and which bore the impress of poverty. Something in his Lordship's manner showed disquiet, if not alarm, which was soon explained. Malignant fever was

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raging in the house. One of his very few priests was at that moment delirious, and another but just recovered. As the disease was most contagious, the Bishop naturally feared for the nuns. But the Sisters' lives were spared for still greater sufferings, while the Father who had invited and blessed them and who would have smoothed away many a difficulty and made their path less thorny, was soon to lie lifeless before their eyes.

When the Sisters were shown to their appointed rooms, their first act was to resume, with much joy, their holy habit, which they had been compelled to put off for so many weeks. The following day, after being installed in their new house in Duke street, they were introduced to a sincere friend, the Venerable Archdeacon Hay, the Bishop's Secretary, and their future confessor, a most holy and devoted priest. They also met Father J. Carroll of Niagara, whose conversation, full of genuine Irish humour, tended to rouse their depressed spirits, and the Rev. F. Ryan, an ecclesiastic of gentle and holy demeanour, high in his Lordship's favour.

The gloom that greeted the Sisters' arrival seemed but to deepen. The Bishop's kind heart was oppressed by the scenes of suffering he witnessed in paying his daily visit to the hospital, and his flushed cheek and restless eye betokened unwonted anxiety. The arrival of the Sisters at such a critical time increased his uneasiness, and nothing could exceed the care he took to ward all danger from them.

The Hon. Mrs. Bolton and her niece, Mrs. Crawford, were the Sisters' first visitors. They kindly

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and courteously welcomed the desolate travellers. Mr. and Mrs. Elmsley next called, and even their first conversation showed how they were animated with true zeal for religion and devotion to their good Bishop. Mr. Elmsley was a convert, not only from Protestantism, but from the most violent bigotry. So great had been his prejudice, that he would not allow Catholics to draw water from his well, lest they should poison it. Through the mercy of God, he not only became a fervent Catholic, but was the heart and soul of every Catholic movement in Toronto. He worked like a common labourer at the erection of St. Michael's Cathedral, where his honoured remains now rest. His two daughters were amongst the first pupils of the school, and were followed by the daughters of Mr. Lynn, another English convert, who ever proved a kind and disinterested friend. Charlotte Lynn, the elder of his children, was the first Child of Mary in the Canadian Schools, and afterwards one of the first postulants. Her sister became, in the world, a model of every womanly virtue; and through her wonderful devotion to the Blessed Virgin, effected much good and triumphed over many difficulties which beset her path. Mrs. De la Haye deserves a kind mention in the annals of Toronto. Five of her daughters were amongst the Sisters' most cherished pupils, and till death she remained a true friend. But perhaps no one displayed more efficient and disinterested friendship than Mr. Molloy. His presents were incessant, and being possessed of a good deal of mechanical skill, he constantly employed it for the service of the Community.

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After this passing tribute of gratitude to those who cheered the first steps of the exiled Sisters, we must resume the painful recital of the Bishop's illness and death. The fatal malady at last attacked this good Father, who was stricken down in the midst of his labours for his desolate Church and suffering flock. He lingered and grew worse day by day, and at last he sank. Mother Mary Ignatia and her sisters were for a time utterly prostrate beneath the heaviness of the blow. At last, arousing their faith and trust in God, they generously accepted this new and unforeseen trial, and tenderly embraced the cross. Father Paré was now sent with kind offers of service on the part of the Bishop of Montreal. Help also came in the person of a former Irish friend, Father Harkin, from whom adverse circumstances had separated the Sisters during the voyage, but who now resigned a post of trust near the Bishop of Quebec to be the Chaplain, Confessor, and, we may say, the Class-Master, at Loretto. He did not consider it beneath him to enter into the smallest details concerning the progress of the pupils, whom he frequently examined and instructed. When obliged to leave the convent, he obtained a promise from Father Paré that every aid in his power would be given to the Community.

Then came the first Christmas in a foreign land, and with it the midnight visit of our Lord to His suffering children. Hard poverty, the bitter cold of that Canadian climate, to which they were yet unused, a terrible feeling of loneliness and desolation were upon them. His presence, indeed, was needed to

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enable them to go on courageously in the way begun; and as they meditated upon the cold, and hunger, and poverty of the cave, and the closed doors and hard words of the Bethlehemites, their own sorrows were forgotten. Taking advantage of their pupils' absence during the Christmas holidays, the Sisters made their annual eight days' retreat, which they had been unable to do at the usual time. During that retreat the Sisters Mary Bonaventura Phelan and Gertrude Fleming showed symptoms of the disease which was to bring them, after terrible suffering, to an early grave. The Sisters who taught in the poor-school, which was a long distance from the convent, were obliged to walk there every day through unusually deep snow; in consequence of being out so early, they beat a path for persons coming after them. When they reached the school their clothes were almost saturated, and in this condition they taught and laboured till five in the afternoon, when they returned home, scarcely able to see their way through the clouds of snow. Sometimes they were even blown off the pathway into the trenches.

One morning, as the Sisters relate, the cold was so intense that, on suddenly entering the school-room, heated by the crowd of little ones, one of the Sisters, overpowered by the change of temperature, fell, to all appearance, lifeless. Help was sought, but when it arrived the courageous religious had already arisen and was presiding over one hundred and twenty pupils.

Sister Mary Gertrude had charge of the poor-school in the city, and Almighty God so permitted

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that, notwithstanding her state of suffering from a swelling in her knee, by which her foot was also affected, she continued to walk to and from the poor school every day, each step causing her intense agony. At last she was obliged to relinquish her labours amongst the poor whom she so much loved; nevertheless, this good Sister, in the true spirit of her vocation, desired to work, and continued to be of much use to the community at home. It was an admirable lesson to see Sister Mary Gertrude enlivening by her cheerful presence the hours of recreation, while the pain she endured from her swollen and gangrened foot never for an instant left her. The wildest and most unmanageable pupils were subdued by her firm, yet gentle, manner, and knowing something of her great sufferings they revered her as a saint. At last amputation was pronounced inevitable, notwithstanding the previous application of the severest remedies, including frequent lancing to the bone. During these painful operations, the sweet calm of this Sister seemed unaltered: she only showed concern for the doctor and those about her. For two or three months before the amputation, being unable to walk, she dragged herself about from place to place as best she could, her patient smile rarely forsaking her.

While Sister Mary Gertrude was thus enduring ceaseless torture, the same disease had carried off Sister Mary Bonaventura, who died on the 11th April, 1849, and also prostrated another of our Sisters, M. de Sales Byrne. The sufferings they endured might have been checked in time but

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for the illness of their physician, Dr. King, whose malady was a protracted one; and so the poor nuns had to suffer till he was able to attend them. About the same time Mother Mary Ignatia became more than usually delicate. Although overwhelmed with physical sufferings, the Sisters enjoyed many spiritual advantages. With self-forgetting, laborious love, they threw themselves into their work, and they had a full share of the internal peace, the cheerfulness and the joyous freedom of spirit, which are the compensations given by God to self-denial and hard labour undertaken for Him.

The Sisters found in their spiritual father, the Rev. M. Paré, a kind and ever-zealous friend. Besides fulfilling the offices of chaplain and confessor, he exerted himself to the utmost of his power to do them every service. Amongst other gifts, he bestowed on the community, at his own expense, an altar, vestments, candlesticks, &c., besides large statues of the Blessed Virgin and St. Joseph. He was not less zealous in his attention to the spiritual needs of the community.

After some time our Sisters moved to a more commodious residence in Simcoe-street, but the sorrows that had surrounded them in their former dwelling at Duke-street followed them to their new home, to which they moved in 1849. Here it was that poor Sister Mary Gertrude submitted to the painful operation that had been before decided on. She underwent the torture without a groan, not even a sigh escaped her, only now and again she lovingly uttered the holy name of Jesus. As if to increase her merit

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the instruments were blunt, thus causing unnecessary pain; and, still more distressing, though the leg was amputated above the knee, the diseased part was not all removed, and all the agony she endured was, in a great measure, useless. God so permitted it, to hasten the time of her happy union with Himself. The life of this saintly religious was uniform. Her rare humility and meekness increased day by day. Months and weeks of pain passed on, and once more came round the anniversary of Christ's Nativity, which likewise proved, we may devoutly hope, the day of her birth to eternal life.

About twelve o'clock on that Christmas Day, 1850, the Community were summoned to her dying-bed to witness the struggle that was to release her from the prison of the body. The agony was long and terrible; but when it past, it left no trace on her angelically meek and smiling countenance. After death, as the Bishop of Quebec knelt by her bedside, he recommended himself to her prayers with confidence, as to one who had already power with God. On the feast of the beloved disciple, St. John, she was buried in the vaults of St. Michael's Church.

On the day of Sister Mary Gertrude's death, Mother Mary Ignatia, with great effort paid a last visit to her dying Sister; she had hardly sufficient strength to walk even a few yards. It was a sad scene—one dear Sister on her dying bed, another fast descending towards that grave which had already received its first victim. Those who enjoyed comparative health, and were to survive were indeed deserving of pity. All were young—quite

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inexperienced, almost without friends, pupils, or any means of support, and they now saw themselves on the eve of losing the Superior on whose virtue and prudence they had every reason to rely.

After the widowed diocese of Toronto had mourned its bereavement for three years, it pleased God to fill the vacant see, by the appointment of the Right Rev. Dr. Charbonnel, a Frenchman of noble birth, and an ecclesiastic of zeal, energy, and perseverance. One of his first acts was to close the eyes and bless by his presence the last moments of Mother Mary Ignatia, who died as she had lived, a lover of the Cross and an undaunted follower of the poverty of her heavenly Spouse. His lordship, seeing her sinking from exhaustion, called for some simple restorative, and his distress was only equalled by his edification at the patient answer, that from their poverty that little alleviation could not be procured for the dying Mother. We may hope she accomplished in heaven by her prayers what Providence denied her on earth, namely, the establishment of the Institute in America.

With the consent of the Community, the Bishop nominated Mother Mary Teresa Dease Superior.[1]

When this news reached Ireland, Mary Teresa expressed her heartfelt approval.

On the occasion of Mother Mary Teresa's

[1] She had entered at Loretto Abbey, Rathfarnham, on the 13th January, 1845; she was clothed with the holy habit on the 15th October of the same year, and was professed on 3rd August, 1847.

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election, the holy Bishop of Toronto wrote the following beautiful letter to the Sisters:—

'*St. Joseph's Day*, 1851.

'DEAR AND REV. SISTERS IN OUR LORD,

'I am happy to know, by what I read and heard, that I can with propriety confer on your most beloved Sister Teresa the title of Rev. Mother.

'She did not claim it, no more than she wished for the authority which Providence has trusted to her devotedness, but yourselves, true daughters of obedience, have called upon your bishop in order to have at your head the sweet name of Mother, and give your submission something more filial.

'Be blessed for such feelings, O dear family of Loretto, be blessed by the holy Trinity of Nazareth! There everyone obeyed and none commanded; there the most excellent was the most obedient; there the last was the first; there all were one in Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, in whose name I will go and bless you this evening at half-past four o'clock.'

Under Mother Mary Teresa's government the Convents of Canada grew and flourished. They had been watered by tears and sufferings, but after a few more trials the Sisters were destined to reap the full harvest of success. When Sister Mary Bonaventure was dying, the weeping Sisters asked her, when she had power with God, to get them help. Three days after her death, Mary Teresa, who, though far away from her devoted children, yet held them in her true and strong heart, thinking

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over their many difficulties, resolved to send them what help she could then spare. Two Sisters generously offered to go forth from country and friends to labour in the distant and then painful mission of Canada. Well they knew the labours and hardships that awaited them, but nothing daunted, they went forth with heroic courage. The fervour of their holy profession sustained them, for they had pronounced their vows on the very morning of their departure. After a stormy passage of eight weeks they landed in Quebec. They were most kindly received by the Ursulines of Quebec, and by the Communities of Montreal.

The welcome they received from their own Sisters at Toronto it would be impossible to describe, and an account of their safe arrival was transmitted to the Rev. Mother by the following letters:—

'My own dear Rev. Mother,

'I have now the happiness of communicating to you the news of the safe arrival of your little missioners, knowing from experience that your maternal heart, which watches with so much anxiety over the least wants of your children at home, will not be less anxious to hear from those that are absent.

'During the voyage we were quite private, had a small cabin, in which were our berths, besides a larger one, where we sat during the day; we called them our cells. Mr. Elmsley, the good and kind captain, sent us our meals, so we were spared all intrusion. We had a dreadful storm for three days.

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Though much frightened, we placed our trust in God, and felt that as we had left all that we loved on this earth for His sake He would not abandon us. We sought protection from Him alone, feeling that if it were His holy will that we should perish, we would be perfectly resigned. Our time was continually employed either in the discharge of our spiritual duties or at needlework. We made our meditations on the Passion of our Lord out of a small book given to me on the day of my Profession; it is called "The Treasure of Patience Hidden in the Wounds of Our Lord." It was truly a treasure to us and a great incentive to make us try to imitate the patience of our Divine Spouse, who suffered so much for us.

'I am quite happy, and would leave home again and a thousand times more if I possessed it, to enjoy the happiness of being the consecrated Spouse of our Lord, who has not disdained to accept the affection of His miserable creature, whose only desire on earth is to serve Him faithfully.

'Sister Ita is quite happy. She sends her respectful love to you, dearest Mother, and desires me to say that she will never cease to pray for you, to whom under God she owes the happiness she now enjoys.

'My own dearest Mother, need I tell you that while this heart of mine shall beat, I will daily implore of Him, who has united our hearts by the holiest bonds of affection, to give you those graces which He sees you require most, and also that the sweet bonds of charity and the sacred chains of our holy rules, which bind each dear member of Loretto,

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may never be broken till death will closely unite us all in heaven?

'Your obedient and grateful child,

'M. JOACHIM MURRAY.'

'*Loretto House, Simcoe-street,*

'*Toronto, 15th September, 1851.*

'VERY DEAR REV. MOTHER,

'I thank you in the name of all for the benefit you have done us, in sending to our aid the two excellent members whom you so justly prized. They arrived safely after a long and stormy passage, and are now quite well and most happy in their transatlantic home. You will be glad to hear that one of these dear Sisters remarked that the customs here are perfectly conformable to those observed in the holy, happy Lorettos of Ireland.

'Our prospects now are very good, thank God; all are in good health and spirits. I am not strong, but much more so than I have been for some time past.

'We expect to have two receptions on the 26th of this month, and two professions in November.

'The dear Sisters have entertained us delightfully by their accounts of the peace, virtue, and consequent happiness of the home they have left.

'I rejoice to hear that you are so well, dearest Rev. Mother; may you long continue so. You were most kind to mention Mother Mary Columba, and Sister

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Mary Eucharia, in whom I feel interested; their early years gave promise of what you now esteem in them. I seldom have the satisfaction of hearing directly from Sister Mary Eucharia; but I am quite resigned, knowing that she is most happy under the more than maternal protection of the kindest of Mothers.

'I shall soon write again, giving you an account of the distribution of offices, &c. &c.

'Earnestly begging your prayers and blessing,

'I remain,

'Dearest Rev. Mother,

'Your fond child in Jesus Christ,

'E. M. TERESA DEASE.'

Two very efficient member soon joined the Community, though there was nothing to attract them but the most rigid poverty; house, novitiate, refectory, all bore its livery. After some time they removed to a new house in Bond-street, in a more healthy situation, but so ill-built, that an Irish priest remarked: "It would be well to get an anchor to prevent the house from floating down the lake." The nuns had everything to do, except to build walls; only three rooms were plastered.

Not long after their removal they lost a promising and valuable member in the person of Sister Mary Magdalen Shea, who had charge of the Poor School, and during her short career had given an example worthy of imitation. The Sisters' prospects, however, began to brighten; health was restored and members hastened to fill the ranks of the

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departed Sisters; so, in 1853, three choir nuns and two lay-sisters were sent to open the first filiation at Brantford, Canada West. This foundation had many trials to encounter, which were, however, as usual productive of much good. Four of the Brantford pupils joined the Institute.

The foundation of Loretto of the Immaculate Conception at Guelph, West Canada, was next undertaken. Three Sisters entered it on the 16th June, 1856, and were gladly welcomed by the Rev. J. Holzer, S. J., whose anticipations of the good to be effected by our nuns in his Mission were more than realised. After three years, there were thirteen nuns and forty-seven children. The Irish population came eagerly to cultivate the grounds, and some German merchants, wishing to testify their admiration of the sisterhood, sent them so bountiful a supply of everything necessary for domestic consumption that the house incurred very little expense for two years. This Loretto, owing to the great care and special culture bestowed upon it by the Jesuit Fathers, has produced many choice vocations for the sanctuary of religion; no less than thirty-four postulants joined the Institute from Guelph in the space of a few years, and no educational establishment in Canada enjoys a higher reputation. The Jesuit Fathers have generously rendered the Sisters many valuable services as chaplains and confessors, without accepting any remuneration. They also conduct the retreats in our houses.

A house was founded in Belleville, under the patronage of St. Joseph, on the 20th August, 1857,

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but circumstances obliged the nuns to give up this mission, to the great affliction of the good priest and his flock. In 1861, Mgr. de Charbonnel resigned the See of Toronto, and in the same year was succeeded by the Right Rev. Dr. Lynch, the present Archbishop, who showed great interest in the Community. He gave them six acres of land in one of the most magnificent sites in the world, close to the Falls of Niagara. The convent was founded 4th June, 1861. Mother Mary Teresa Dease gave notice of the foundation to the Rev. Mother of Rathfarnham in the following words :—

'I am happy to inform you that our good Bishop has given us six acres of land at the far-famed Falls of Niagara. His Lordship wishes to have a community of regular clergy and another of nuns, that, as he says, the voice of prayer may mingle with the "sound of many waters," and make a music pleasing to God.

'The Falls are visited from all parts of the world, particularly from the States; persons suppose that if we had a fine house there it would soon be filled with Protestants and Catholics. The Americans are sincere and open to conviction, and courageous in embracing the truth when they are convinced, so that I think with God's mercy and grace, we would have many converts.'

This convent likewise had the blessed privilege of being founded on the Cross. Trials and privations strewed the Sisters' path, and death, too, came, robbing them of a sincere friend and a zealous, holy pastor, the Rev. C. J. Juliel. Although the mother-

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house at Toronto gave most generous assistance towards repairing and enlarging the building, yet the house, formerly an hotel, did not by any means correspond with the beauty of the surrounding scenery, but there were cheerful, self-denying hearts and smiling faces to brighten its gloom, and the pupils became even more warmly attached to this Loretto than to the more commodious and conventual-looking sister houses. A large Poor School was also built and furnished.

By the special desire of Dr. Lynch, the Sisters at Niagara have established the custom of Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament on the first Sunday of every month, so that the spray of the mighty cataract, which is constantly ascending in homage to the great Creator, is united in silent adoration with the clouds of incense that betoken the presence of the mighty Dweller in the little sanctuary. A highly gifted young lady, residing near, was one of the first converts. Her fervent piety edified our Sisters and their young pupils, until she was called to receive the crown of life.

The episcopal city of Hamilton was the next spot chosen for the Sisters' labours and zeal. Under the protection of the Right Rev. Dr. Farrell, on the 13th September, 1865, they established the Convent of Mount St. Mary, and placed it under the protection of 'Mater Admirabilis.' Notwithstanding the strong opposition of Protestant schools, the success of this establishment is quite unprecedented in Canada. Not only did the Protestant laity give their cordial support, but one of the most influential

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and learned clergymen placed his daughter under the care of the nuns, and recommended the school to others. Another minister enjoined in his will that his daughter should be educated in the Convent, and during his life he brought the Sisters many pupils.

We must now return to Toronto. From the time of our Sisters' removal to Bond-street they received a great increase both of members and pupils. This house was sanctified by the edifying life and singularly holy death of a young nun, Sister Mary Agatha, in whom no fault against regular observance was ever remarked. As a pupil, her reputation for the observance of all school regulations was so great, that merriment was once excited when in the weekly report, through mistake, a fault was laid to her charge. On her deathbed she edified all by her fear of infringing even the least rule. After her death, which took place on the 3rd January, 1865, just six months from her holy Profession, her examen card was found under her pillow, marked to the very day she died.

The next purchase made for a foundation was an estate called Lyndhurst, which belonged to Mrs. Widdar, a lady of high birth. The ceremony of blessing the future convent drew numbers of the surrounding gentry to this truly magnificent cloister, and the result of their admiration was immediately apparent in the number of pupils who filled the Boarding and Day-Schools. This increase necessitated an additional building of dormitories and corridors, with cells on each side, and a beautiful tower, which

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commands a full view of the city of Toronto, the lake, and the surrounding country. On the 14th September, 1871, was laid the foundation stone of a new church, which has since arisen, and is dedicated to the Holy Family and St. Teresa.

We have in these few pages made some effort to tell of the long, and, at times, weary struggle of our Sisters in America. Suffering and hardship in every form was their lot, but as we have seen, 'no sign of sadness was among them, not a sound of murmuring, but all blessed God with fervour, poor in worldly goods, but rich in faith.' And God rewarded their patience. New members crowded in to share their hard life, and as the years went on, the blessing of God still attended their labours. The work begun in so much sorrow and weakness has borne abundant fruit, and those who sank beneath the hardships and privations of its early years, are now, we trust, interceding with God for the continuance of His favours, and a still further extension of the mission of our Canadian Sisters.

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CHAPTER XIII.

Some more Letters.

WE shall pause for awhile after the narration of the foundations of the Institute in Canada in order to subjoin some of the letters which passed between Mary Teresa and her children in that distant land. These letters, like all those which remain to us, are very simple and unstudied in their kind, and are not given here as showing either power of argument or grace of style. But such letters are sufficient evidence of the deep affectionateness as well as of the sound practical judgment of Mary Teresa, qualities which are also reflected in her correspondence. Her religious children will always cherish such remains of her mind and heart.

'*Adoremus in æternum S.S.*

'*Loretto Abbey, Rathfarnham,*
'*16th April*, 1851.

'VERY DEAR MOTHER MARY TERESA,

'Yesterday your letter of 25th ult. arrived, to enable us to be certain of the loss of our revered and beloved Mother Mary Ignatius, whose maternal

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solicitude for the community you will cheerfully assume. Like St. Peter, who was required to feed the flock, you are obliged to be head, when chosen to govern your community. May the divine blessing attend you, as it evidently does your dear sister, Mother Eucharia.

'You will make the five promises in the spirit of Mother Mary Columba,[1] who governs well at St. Columba's, Bray.

'St. Gregory says it is as easy for God to extricate us from great difficulties as from small ones, and more glorious to Him. St. Peter was as safe walking on water as on dry land, at the command of Jesus; when he began to fear he began to sink. What have we to fear when God appoints us to govern? Is He not powerful enough to assist us, sufficiently wise to guide us? Has He not a principle of goodness ever urging Him to benefit us? And St. Ignatius tells us to do the work as if success depended on our own efforts; but to be certain that God alone can crown our operations for His greater glory.

'I shall be delighted to receive back Sister Mary N——, who, I trust, will recruit in the mild air of Bray or here.

'My affection leads me in spirit to each of your dear flock.

'My respect to your worthy Bishop.

'Our Rev. Archbishop is well, and a saint.

'Ever your affectionate,

'FRANCES MARY TERESA BALL.'

[1] Mother Mary Teresa's cousin.

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'*26th April*, 1851.

'VERY DEAR MOTHER MARY TERESA,

'I imagine you will submit to the position you are placed in, when you recollect how desirous St. Patrick was to remain with his friends in Gaul rather than labour to convert the Irish nation. During this mental conflict, St. Patrick, in spirit, considered the future infants of this country crying out to him to regenerate them; his heart was moved, and he sacrificed feeling to duty, and became the apostle of this Island of Saints.

'Our Institute in Ireland began with three young religious. One died four years after we were established here, and helped us more by her intercession in heaven than she could have done had she remained on earth. You will prosper, under God.

'A letter from the convent at York, where I lived twelve years, states that schools are being built in the city, at a distance from the convent. Three of the Sisters, by the bishop's wish, are to attend these schools. When fine they will walk, in rain they will have a conveyance. The nuns are delighted to extend their instructions. You will imitate this example.

'On Easter Monday an industrial school was opened at Loretto, Gorey. Twenty-one girls attended, and made a good attempt at fancy work, knitting, crochet, &c. Two choir sisters are going into eight days' retreat for holy profession; two

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choir sisters are also to be received by our venerable archbishop, who is wonderfully well.

'Respects to your bishop, and love to you and to your flock from,

'Your affectionate,

'FRANCES MARY TERESA BALL.'

'*29th November*, 1851.

'VERY DEAR MOTHER MARY TERESA,

'I hope you and flock are well.

'Two sisters were professed on the 21st of this month; one was a niece of the Father Provincial of the Jesuits. We have ten novices, three postulants, sixty-four boarders, sixteen day pupils, a hundred and twenty-five poor children here. All are enjoying health and prosperity. We live in great union and concord, God be praised.

'The last Saturday of every month each boarder plays a piece of music, while the others repair their garments. We have a music teacher from Dublin. The first Tuesday of the month the Mistress of Schools reads aloud the judgments of pupils, written by their mistresses.

'Historical and instructive works are read aloud in the Young Ladies' Refectory, of which they afterwards write an account.

'The daily explanation of the Christian Doctrine falls to me; our pupils write a *resumé* of these instructions. All the exercise-books and music are shown the first Tuesday of the month.

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'I have asked dear M. Eucharia to write to you, but being Dispenser, Mistress of the house, Guest Mistress, and Dramatiser of our little pieces for Christmas amusements, she has not leisure. This moment she is attending a postulant who is with her sister in the parlour. Only with parents do we allow nuns or children to speak alone in the parlour.

'This week we heard from Calcutta that "Johnny of Dalkey," who was instructed by you for his first Communion, turned sailor. He did not like his last voyage to Calcutta, but Mother Mary Philomena made interest to have him admitted into the school taught by the Christian Brothers. Mother Mary Philomena is thought to be very delicate. There are sixty-four boarders at Calcutta, where Sister Mary de Sales Healy, a novice, died on the 26th July, 1851. She was only a few days in bed.

'Mother Mary Austin Hearne's letter from the Mauritius came this week. She expects to found a Loretto in the country before the 8th September, 1852, which will be the seventh anniversary of her arrival in the Mauritius.

'One of her boarders, named Mary Brouet, sailed from Mauritius to Calcutta with her parents. They were asleep, when at four o'clock, A.M., they awoke with the vessel striking against a rock. Finding the vessel was sinking, they got into a life-boat, which landed them on a desert island, where they were supported by the wild fowl for forty-five days. On the 8th September Mary Brouet knelt down and implored the Mother of God to assist them by her intercession in their desolate state. Three days after

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they saw a vessel at a great distance, they made signs of distress, it approached, and the captain, who was an Englishman, took all on board and sailed back with them to the Mauritius, when Mary hastened to the convent to relate her adventures to Mother Mary Austin.

'On the 2nd October, Mother Mary Anne Hickey sailed for Liverpool with five professed; they arrived at St. Wilfred's Church, Manchester, on the 3rd October. The Priests gave their house to our Sisters. The church cost £15,000. The gilding and painted glass of the sanctuary cost £700. Three thousand poor children require to be instructed. The poor school is built. The convent has yet to be erected. Our nuns kneel at Our Lady's altar, where a lamp always burns; a curtain screens our Sisters from the congregation. Twenty-four boys sing the Gregorian Chant devoutly and melodiously. There are three Masses and a sermon every Sunday. Complin is sung. Benediction every Sunday and Thursday evening. The people join in the choruses.

'On the 14th October, Mother Mary Christina O'Reilly and three Sisters sailed for Cadiz, *via* Liverpool, where Queen Victoria was at the time. The 18th October they sailed in the fine vessel Orontes for Gibraltar, where they remained at Loretto, there to be edified by our Sisters, whom Mother Mary Christina called angels. They taught seventy-nine pupils and two hundred poor; their needlework was exquisite and their drawings numerous. On the 10th inst. our Sisters arrived in Cadiz, and went,

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they say, to a palace with an oratory as large as our refectory, and thirty pupils. There are terraces and sufficient ground to take exercise in the open air. Our nuns are not to be at any expense for the first year; their equipment and travelling expenses were paid by their foundress, for whom you and community will offer three Masses and three Communions; the same for the founder in England.

'I have a great intention for the general good, for which I solicit prayers to St. Bridget during six months.

'My respects to your good bishop.

'Introduce me to all your flock, and give them my love. Let me know how your dear children succeed in every respect.

'We have opened a door between our convent and boarding-school here, and made a new dormitory for ten lay-sisters, and a chapel in which to adore the Blessed Sacrament during the night.

'Two sisters went from Loretto, Navan, to Dacca, East India, to assist Mother Mary Benigna Egan.

'Four Gordons, pupils from Spain, are here; their mothers were also here. We have three pupils from Calcutta, one from Madras, and one from Oporto.

'Remember me to Mr. Elmsley and Mr. O'Neill.

'Ever your fond

'F. Ball.'

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'*13th December*, 1851.

'VERY DEAR MOTHER MARY TERESA,

'I am happy to mention that the last mail from India gives pleasing accounts of dear Mother Mary Philomena's health, which she recovered with the cold weather. The heat last summer exceeded the sixteen preceding warm seasons in Bengal, Madras, and Cadiz.

'Your dry climate is salubrious. The order of the day with us conduces to health: may we use it to the divine glory, and by moderate care continue in the performance of our duties so long as the Almighty designs.

'Mother Mary Gertrude is actually teaching painting to three of our novices. At her advanced age she copies pictures in crayons exactly, embroiders vestments splendidly, is the first up at five o'clock, A.M., and retires with us all; she had but one illness during twenty-one years of religious life.

'If you enjoy God in heaven before I reach that blessed rest, ask that I may love God with my whole heart, and promote His glory according to the utmost capability He gives me. If I have the good fortune to anticipate you in enjoying the Beatifical Vision, I will demand the same divine favours for you. All the commissions I gave our Sisters, when dying, were executed; their intercession was soon experienced when they were removed from us to their eternal reward.

'All with us are well and united in cordial affection. It is glorious to live to labour.

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'Mother Eucharia is useful, very edifying, and much liked.

'Father Mathew called, on his return from America. He is in better health than when he left Ireland. He praised the Irish females in the United States, where they spread the faith like apostles.

'We find monthly examinations serviceable in our classes. We have general examinations in the summer, at the end of which premiums are distributed.

'St. John Cantius is invoked for affections of the chest.

'I am preparing some of our dear little pupils for their first Communion on the 10th June, Corpus Christi. One child is from Calcutta, another from Madras, and a third from Spain, whose mamma spent seven years here. We call Mercedes Gordon our grandchild, her mamma and aunt having made their first Communion here.

'Our sixty boarders improve by their judgments being read aloud before me once a month.

'I request, with sincere affection to each dear Sister, that you will soon inform me of your health.

'Ever yours in the Sacred Heart,

'FRANCES BALL.'

'*17th February*, 1852.

'VERY DEAR MOTHER MARY TERESA,

'I rejoice to learn your improvement in health from Sister N.

'Mother Eucharia is a very good religious, and greatly liked. Her health enables her to be so oc-

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cupied as to be deprived of time to write to her friends. I know her heart pours forth warm affections to God for us all.

'Except a few slight colds, our family of a hundred and nineteen enjoy health, spirits, and prosperity. We have seventy-one boarders here.

'Mother Mary Christina writes that she knows the language already, and will soon write to me in Spanish. Our Sisters like Spain and the Spaniards.

'We had a ceremony on the 1st inst. To-day a choir postulant and a lay-sister arrived to us from England.

'Six hundred and thirty-six persons waited on our Sisters at Manchester, and spoke an address.

'I shall be delighted to see Dr. Tellier and your good friend, Mr. Lynn, at Loretto.

'On the last Saturday of each month we have a concert. On the first Tuesday each pupil reads aloud to me, shows her thimble, scissors, needles, thread, and work; judgments are then read. Small premiums are given monthly, and once a year prizes are distributed.

'I was charmed with Dr. Tellier's discourse on education.

'Our chaplain gives me an intention in his daily Mass for three months. *Do* pray to St. Bridget for an object truly useful to you and our dear Institute.

'We are all in concord and health. Take all the nourishment you can, and be as much as you are able in the open air.

'A hundred and twenty-five children attend our Poor-School.

'The pocket-money of our pupils is often well

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applied to clothe the little ones who suffer so much from cold at this inclement season.

'The Loretto Manual is being printed.

Love to each dear Sister.

'I am sure Sister N. pleases you.

'Ever your fond

'F. BALL.'

'*26th February*, 1852.

'VERY DEAR MOTHER MARY TERESA,

'Our beloved Archbishop breathed his last at twenty minutes after six o'clock, A.M., this day, and passed to enjoy eternal bliss.

'His Grace was struck with apoplexy while preparing for Mass. On Shrove Tuesday his Grace spoke of providing for some orphans. Quick circulation in the hand and arm denoted disease, which blisters could not remove, and bleeding was not allowed, he being in his 86th year. His Grace confirmed 1,500 last Sunday, and was at the obsequies of Shiel.—R.I.P. . . .

'Three foundations are proposed to me; pray that in all things I may comply with the Divine Will. . . .

'Some affairs time arranges. If our words are always true, kind, and useful; if we avoid showing partiality, and maintain regular observance for the Divine glory, God will protect us. If we seek first the kingdom of God and His justice, all things else will be added unto us.

'Love to each. Respects to Dr. Tellier.

'Your fond,

F. BALL.'

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'*26th April*, 1852.

'VERY DEAR MOTHER MARY TERESA,

'I had the pleasure of receiving your dear letter of the 24th April.

'I rejoice you are all well.

'I was two-and-a-half days absent at St. Wilfrid's, Manchester, where our nuns are all well and contented; I spoke to each separately.

* * * * * *

'Mary Eucharia enjoys health, and is well employed. Mother Mary Columba rules at Dalkey, where they style her a saint; truly she seems pleasing to God.

'The Father of Sister Mary Stanislaus and Sister Mary Baptist died last night at eleven o'clock, two months after the death of our late venerated Archbishop, the early school companion of Mr. Christopher M'Donnell, who consoled me in my novitiate by offering, for the education of his four daughters, to pay down £1,000 when we should found in Ireland. I was consoled to hear from this benefactor that money was well laid out in this abbey. The approbation of Mr. Corballis, the father of our first postulant, whose sister subsequently entered here, was evinced by his giving £4,000 to this Community.

'Three novices, one an English convert, another who spent eight years in France, were professed on Easter Monday. Three months previously they were examined by our saintly founder. Did you receive the newspaper account of his decease? I forwarded one to each of our colonial convents.

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'Storm heaven for an intention for which we invoke St. Bridget, patroness of religious in Ireland.

'With love to each of your dear flock, respects to your good Bishop.

'Ever your affectionate,

'F. BALL.'

'*28th January*, 1853.

'VERY DEAR MOTHER MARY TERESA,

'I have the pleasure of mentioning that dear Mother Eucharia and Mother Mary Columba are here. They are well and all that can be wished.

'I rejoice at your receiving five Sisters. Providence provides wonderfully for Loretto. We all enjoy peace, concord, and health. The sole exception to the latter state is dear Sister Mary Walburga, who received the last rites of the Church on the 21st inst, having spent well nine years in religion. She asked to go on a mission to the south of Spain; her parents objected, and now she has fallen a victim to consumption during this severe winter.

'Our pupils are well and remarkably good. Our youngest is from Buenos Ayres; she is an intelligent child of six years of age. Mother Mary Columba takes great pains teaching her.

'The late chaplain's house is now the novitiate, approached from the convent by a glass passage. The dancing-room, sixty feet by fifty, answers for an examination-hall and a lecture-room. We have thrown down three partition walls to enlarge schools. An acre has been added to our lawn near the church.

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'We attribute our peace and harmony to the intercession of our late venerated Archbishop, who, I am sure, intercedes for us before the throne of God.

'On the 20th, 21st, and 22nd November, we had exposition of the Blessed Sacrament; two High Masses, at which the public were present. Perpetual adoration continues here. . . .

'I request best and affectionate love to each dear Sister, as if named. My respects to the good convert who visited Loretto, Rathfarnham, and to Mr. O'Neill.

'I am sure you pray for us.

'Any account of your filiating to the Falls of Niagara? There are few Catholics there.'

'This is the severest winter known for a long time. Storms have averted the cholera. . . .

'Your brother William succeeds in Australia.

'Ever your affectionate,

'F. BALL.'

'*September*, 1854.

'VERY DEAR MOTHER MARY TERESA,

'It cheered us to receive your letter, dated 27th May, 1854.

'Two days previous to your writing, our sweet Loretto, Baymount, Clontarf, was burned to the ground. Not a hair of any person's head was injured. Nothing was saved in the chapel, dormitories, dressing-room, or schools. *Fiat!* We received twenty-five of the inmates, who had only the clothes they wore.

'The last arrival of goods from lovely Lough

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Cooter Fort was the first accession of goods to Saint Eunan's, Letterkenny, county Donegal. The house, nine acres of good land, a place in the church, a good free school, all within the enclosure, were bestowed on us at a small rent by the Bishop of Raphoe, whose niece is Superior.

'Loretto, Fermoy, succeeds; all are well. I had a letter from Mother Mary Eucharia on the 9th inst., all flourishing. I was just called to Mr. Elmsley and family; they saw the house and grounds. They praised Sister N's. goodness, related the reception of Miss Corrigan, and told us that your valuable health was improved.

'On the 8th May Mother Mary Gertrude Lambert gained her crown, earned by twenty-four years spent in religion. . . .

'She worked stoles and did crayon drawings without wearing spectacles at the age of eighty-four.—R.I.P. A newspaper was sent to you relating her death. She regularly repeated the Rosary at five o'clock, P.M., to the last evening of her well-spent life.

'The accounts from Spain are cheering. Our Sisters sought to be legally established there by Government ineffectually during three years. On the 19th of last July their holy benefactress, Teresa Magawly, Countess of Cabry, departed this life.

'On again applying to Government the ministers granted, in five days after the decease of Miss Magawly, what they had delayed granting during three years. Our Sisters, having now the Royal Order, can found in any part of Spain. Postulants have joined at Cadiz.

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'Very Rev. Eugene O'Reilly, P.P., V.G., Founder of St. Anne's Loretto, Navan, died on the 10th December, 1852. Our Lady of Loretto is commemorated on that day. We are to offer three Masses, three Communions, and one whole Rosary for our benefactress, Teresa Magawly; the same for our benefactor, Very Rev. Eugene O'Reilly; also for Mother Mary Gertrude, with the addition of one office for the dead.

'Mrs. Elmsley will describe the appearance of Loretto, Rathfarnham. We have eighteen good voices in the orchestra; our white novices are likely to persevere; all prosper here. "All for Jesus," by Father Faber, is much read.

'Our Archbishop goes to Rome this month, but will return to open the university on the 3rd November next.

'Free Schools are completed at Dalkey, Bray, and Loretto, Stephen's-green, East. More than a hundred pupils in each of our Free Schools; they are satisfactory. The grain of mustard seed of our dear Institute flourishes.

'Love to each from your fond

'F. BALL.'

'*Clontarf, 10th August*, 1853.

'VERY DEAR MOTHER MARY TERESA,

'Your letters of 10th and 11th July were welcome. Thirty-two years ago three nuns left York on this day: these lines will be posted on 12th August, when we arrived to commence our Mission.

'I think you will do well to send a colony of nuns

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amongst the farmers. The mustard seed in that locality may flourish into a respectable Loretto.

'I am scribbling to you at Clontarf. I leave with six others to-morrow for Rathfarnham. We have had a delightful retreat from Pinamonti, in French. The Life of St. Ignatius was read aloud. With all that is affectionate to each dear one with you, I conclude. Hoping soon to hear from you.

'Your fond

'F. BALL.'

'10*th September*, 1853.

'VERY DEAR MOTHER MARY TERESA,

'I am charmed at your foundation at Brantford, and the selection you have made of a head and members.

'It is quite right for you to take charge of the novices. Some one under you to inspect manual works is required. If Sister N. be required at Niagara, a prudent Sister will be desirable to accompany her as consultress; and if she write to you every week, there will be little to fear if she implicitly follow your directions. The more we filiate, the more glory we give to Almighty God, and the more souls we concur to save. I like founding where I am asked. I never had courage to borrow money, being uncertain how our foundations would turn out.

'A lady exercitant is making a retreat here.

'Our pupils are well, and very good and studious. Love to each from

'Your ever affectionate,

'FRANCES BALL.'

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'*13th March*, 1856.

'VERY DEAR MARY TERESA,

'I received your welcome note, dated 17th February, yesterday.

'Our community Sisters have a separate lecture, also a separate apartment for recreation. Novices have an adjoining house. Lay-Sisters have also a separate apartment for lectures, recreation, and needlework. After lecture in each of these three degrees, each Sister can speak in private to the Superior, or make reparation aloud for faults committed

* * * * * *

'We have founded thirty-one Loretto houses, and we all live in great union and charity, and are diligently employed at the avocations of our celestial vocation. I had letters this week from Fermoy. Mother Mary Eucharia wrote twice to me within a few days. All well there, and obedient to the head.

'Only one boarder died with us during thirty-four years. She died of fever. She was to go to Singapore. She had not a religious vocation, but prayed never to leave Rathfarnham.

'I heard from Calcutta this week. All going on well there. Two postulants entered from the school last year. . . .

'Love to all from your affectionate,

'FRANCES BALL.'

'*16th May*, 1856.

'VERY DEAR MOTHER MARY TERESA,

'I infer from the arrival of the weekly papers from Toronto that you and yours are progressing in all that is desirable.

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'Visiting the sick was a very good work, but teaching catechism was incomparably better. If children be well instructed, though they may for years neglect the sacraments, grace generally returns, and they make a good confession before death, while those who are not instructed in their youth have much more difficulty. Only priests understand, from their experience at the tribunal of penance, the great benefit of early instruction. . .

'I am very well and happy. Meditation on the Passion gives me comfort. I confidently hope for salvation through the divine mercy. If we are faithful to our holy rules God will protect us, and if God be for us, who shall be against us? Let us fear God, and have no other fear.

'I shall always be delighted to receive your letters.

'The edifying life of Mother Mary Benedicta Somers is being written for you.

'Have you no Children of Mary? If not I can send you the rules of the Congregation and the form of admission. We have Benediction every evening this sweet May. Piety predominates among our pupils. The Children of Mary communicate every Sunday.

'We are making vestments of the trains worn at reception—green, red, purple, and white.

'I trust you will gratify us by a favourable account of your houses. At perpetual adoration we pray for all the Lorettos.

'This is the anniversary of Mother Mary Gertrude Lambert's natal day. She was wonderful to enter our novitiate at fifty years of age, and to persevere

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in religious observances to the day of her death. We have not seen her like.—R.I.P.

'Love to each from

'Your affectionate,

'FRANCES BALL.'

'*17th March*, 1857.

'VERY DEAR MOTHER MARY TERESA,

'I was delighted this post to receive your kind letter. . . .

'May God enlighten our minds, so that we may promote His glory and not seek our own interests but the good of all.

'Mother Mary Philomena Frizelle, deservedly called a saint by her Infirmarian, has received the last rites of the Church. She never lost the cough she brought from India. I ask her to obtain that we may be all united under one head.

'I am delighted to be of the least use to my loved children, above all those in foreign climes; so I describe "marks."

'Every nun has a book, with the names of her pupils therein inserted, and marks are noted daily. If a pupil be absent, her omission is noted. At the end of three months each mistress adds her marks and gives them to the First Mistress, who reads them aloud before Rev. Mother, in the examination-hall for nuns and pupils.

'Rev. Mother confers ribands of merit—amber, with silver fringe, red and white, with gold fringe at the end—on the most deserving; these are worn at

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stated times. I enclose patterns of these and the silk uniform.

'Love to all from

'Your affectionate

'F. BALL.'

'*Natal Day of St. F. Xavier, S.J.*,

'*7th April*, 1857.

'VERY DEAR MOTHER MARY TERESA,

'I answered your letter of 27th February by Mr. Wright.

'I have the life of Mother Mary Benedicta, Mary Hibbart, Sister Mary Scholastica, and Sister Paula, lay-sister, to send you. . . .

'I am as happy as possible, striving not to deviate from the practice I learned in my seven years' novitiate. Sister N. would also be happy if she adhered to the instructions she received in her novitiate. . .

'All our Sisters departing this life, with hope of heaven, promise to obtain charity with each other and union with the Head Superior for those they leave here.

'We are as free from annoyance as any community can be.

'Pray that I may accomplish the duties of my state and charge, and that all may be united under one head. Love to all our dear Sisters at Toronto and Guelph.

'Ever, very dear Mother Mary Teresa,

'Your affectionate

'FRANCES BALL.'

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'*31st January*, 1859.

'DEARLY BELOVED MARY TERESA,

'I rejoiced to receive your dear letter.

'I had a letter from Mary Delphina Hart, who comes from Calcutta (overland) in February. She was five years here at Rathfarnham, where she says she spent the happiest days of her existence. When she arrives I will consult with her on our affairs in Canada. We did not see a fault in her during her five years' novitiate. She has had nineteen years' experience in India since.

'The Bishop of Toronto not thinking your visit to N. calculated to produce good effect, it is better not to undertake it.

'Local superiors are generally changed every three years.' . . .

'*25th October*, 1859.

'VERY DEAR MOTHER MARY TERESA,

'On the 18th inst., Ellen M. Baptist McDonnell prayerfully breathed her last in our presence, for whom you will offer the usual suffrages.

'I enclose £50 towards discharging the debts of Loretto, Guelph, Hamilton. Dr. O'Farrell, the Bishop, has not written to me. I think it may be advisable for the late Superior of Guelph to remain at Belleville.

'The winter with us has set in suddenly severely. I am now recovered from an attack of inflammation, and am not yet able to write, which obliges me to employ a secretary. Will it be for the advantage of

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the health of our dear Sisters in Canada to rise later in winter, and wear warmer clothing? The change in the distribution of time you allude to seems indispensable.

'I rejoice in the triumph about N. Providence is very liberal to our dear Institute, which, as far as we know, is in good repute all over the world.

'Mother Mary Delphina arrived looking younger than when she went to India, nineteen years ago, and in the same repute for her exemplary life and wisdom.

'With love to all our dear Sisters,

'I remain, very dear Mother Mary Teresa,

'Most affectionately yours,

'F. BALL.'

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CHAPTER XIV.

Other Foundations in Ireland and England.

THE general character of the history of the successive foundations of the convents of a new institute does not vary to any great extent, though there are always incidents in one which are not repeated in another. Before Mary Teresa closed her earthly course, she was able to see her branch of the Institute of the Blessed Virgin very securely established in her native country, as well as in several of the dependencies of the British crown; and if its progress latterly has not been so rapid, this has chiefly been caused by the fact that Ireland is at this moment almost, if not quite sufficiently furnished with educational establishments of a high order, in proportion to the wants of its population. The great facilities of travelling in modern times make it comparatively a matter of indifference whether a school or college is placed close at hand, in every town of such countries as Great Britain and Ire-

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land. The schools for the poor must always be multiplied according to the needs of each parish or village; but, for the easier classes, this multiplication is no longer necessary as of old, although it must still be maintained as a great principle of Christian education, that there are peculiar advantages in the system which enables the children of a family to obtain the blessings of the highest instruction, without being of necessity separated from their homes and their parents.

We left the history of the foundations in Ireland at the point at which the convent at Gorey was the last of the new houses. Gorey was founded in 1843. The first mission of the Sisters to India had preceded that foundation by nearly two years. In 1845, the Sisters had been sent to Mauritius, and at the end of the same year, to Gibraltar; the mission to Canada had not been sent out till 1847, while that to Cadiz was not till 1851. In the meantime, the Lorettos of Ireland had been growing in number. The next after Gorey was the first unsuccessful foundation. This was a house at Clontarf, known as Baymount Castle, about three miles from Dublin to the north-east, which Mary Teresa purchased in the summer of 1847. The house was large and magnificent, and had some beau-

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tiful gardens; it was close to the sea, and had great conveniences for bathing. The school soon filled, and the house flourished for several years; but, in 1854, during the Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament on the Feast of the Ascension, May 25th, the drapery of the altar decorations took fire, and in a few hours the whole house was burned down. No life was lost, and as the calamity happened in the daytime, the whole community, nuns and boarders, were safely housed at Rathfarnham before night fell. With her perfect resignation to God's will, Mary Teresa received the news without a murmur of complaint. Within the year the house was rebuilt, and the nuns once again installed in it; but there were some difficulties about the lease, and Mary Teresa was unable to make all the improvements and additions which were thought necessary. After her death the community was transferred to Balbriggan.

Three years after the first beginnings at Baymount Castle, the new foundation at Bray Head was accomplished. The house which was purchased for the purpose was in every respect delightful, and the school soon became popular on account of the beautiful situation and healthy air. The first Mass was said in this new Loretto

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on the Feast of St. Catharine, November 25th 1850, and the educational work was begun in the following January. A large free-school for the children of the poor was soon added, and has continued to flourish to the present time.

In the following year, the Irish Institute of the Blessed Virgin repaid in some measure the training which its first Sisters had received in England, by sending its first colony to that country. This was to Hulme, Manchester, the mission of the indefatigable and highly-respected priest, Canon Toole. Six Sisters, the superior of whom was Mother Anne Hickey, were sent to Manchester in October, 1851. As their convent was not yet built, the good canon placed his own presbytery at their disposal. They were soon at work, and, in May, 1853, they were installed in their present convent. Hulme was then an outlying district of the great manufacturing city of the north; but it is now enclosed on all sides by an immense population. The Sisters have a boarding-school as well as some very fine schools for the children of the poor.

It was in the interval between the first arrival of the Sisters at Manchester and their entrance on their new convent, that Mary Teresa was called on by God to suffer the first great blow

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which fell on her since she had undertaken the work of the Institution in Ireland. During all the years which had elapsed since her beginnings at Rathfarnham, she had been in constant intercourse with, and continual dependence on, her great and most devoted father in the spiritual life, Archbishop Murray. The records of his guidance and assistance to her soul are hidden from mortal eyes. He was of course a constant resident in his diocese, and the work at Rathfarnham was his own creation. He seems to have visited the convent almost weekly; at all events, his visits were so frequent that there was but little occasion for correspondence. The letters that remain to us from the archbishop to his chosen and most cherished child are very few, and they are but ordinary short notes on little matters of daily interest or business, and are so occasional in their character as not to furnish much material for the historian. Most of them were written while he was absent in the country, at Rahan, in the county Wicklow. We have already seen that Mary Teresa herself was not a letter-writer, in the proper sense of the term; her words were always few and simple, and, if she had learned while almost a girl to express herself easily and fluently when she had to speak, there is but little

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effusiveness in those letters of hers which we have printed. We see in her the calm, business-like, but warm-hearted superior. But there is always a reserve and self-restraint, even when she writes to her dearest spiritual children. Her letters to the archbishop may have been as few as his to her, and, whether they were many or few, we do not possess them. The close connection and intimate tie between these two great but calm souls has left no traces of itself behind, except in the work in which Daniel Murray was the constant and unfailing guide and support of Mary Teresa. Probably she hardly conceived the possibility that the time was to come when she would have to work on without the help of her father in our Lord. Her whole life had been under his guidance; it was almost as natural for her to turn to him as the representative of God as it was to turn to God Himself in prayer.

But the time came at last when this most intimate portion of her life was to come to an end, as far, at least, as such connections can come to an end, by the severance of the outward intercourse and sensible companionship on which it rested. At the beginning of 1852, Dr. Murray was in his eighty-fourth year; but there was nothing save his great age to alarm the number-

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less souls who looked up to him as their pastor and spiritual father. We are all blind to the stealthy progress of decay in those whom we love; and in the case of Archbishop Murray, the decline of his powers was not perceptible. 'Up to May, 1851,' writes the chronicler of Rathfarnham, 'the archbishop's health seemed still unimpaired, but about that time a severe cold nearly brought him to the grave.' A respite, however, was granted to the prayers of his children, and, having recovered, he applied as usual to his various duties. As the year went on he seemed to regain his wonted vigour, while his clear intellect and gentle gaiety never forsook him. Since his ordination, Dr. Murray had made it an invariable rule, unless confined by illness to bed, to celebrate the Holy Sacrifice every day; no fatigue, no labours were ever allowed to interfere with this practice, prompted by his ardent love for the most Blessed Sacrament, and his great compassion for the suffering souls in purgatory. Once, when he specially needed rest after a day of anxious labour, a friend, somewhat amazed at finding him up at his usual hour, preparing to celebrate Mass, remonstrated with him upon it as an imprudence. He answered: "At every Mass that is offered, some poor soul in

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purgatory is relieved; what a cruelty, then, would it be to neglect it!"

On Quinquagesima Sunday, February 22nd, he visited Rathfarnham for the last time; he left copies of the Lenten pastoral for each Loretto in the archdiocese, gave the dispensations necessary for the coming Lent, had a long and animated conversation with his nieces, examined three novices for profession, one of whom was the present Superior of Rathfarnham, Mother Xaveria Fallon; and after treating with all in his usual affable and gracious way, took his leave, saying, "Now I leave you, and give you my blessing." It happened that Mary Teresa was absent from Rathfarnham on some business of the house at Bray, and thus she missed the last visit of her beloved father.

The unexpected blow fell two days later. On the Tuesday morning, the archbishop was preparing to say Mass in his private oratory, when the stroke of death fell upon him. He lingered for two days in a state of great suffering, and with but the faintest signs of consciousness; but when on the Thursday night, seeing that a great change for the worse was at hand, one of the priests in attendance read aloud the Passion of our Lord, according to St. John,

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the archbishop raised his hand as if to give his blessing to his spiritual children around him, and breathed his last just at the words which relate the expiration of our Lord Himself. His body was embalmed and lay in state for some days, visited in crowds by his faithful and sorrow-stricken people. He had been their bishop for forty-three years, and had laboured for them with a single-hearted devotion and a success which have few parallels, even in the annals of the Irish episcopacy.

On no one could the blow fall with greater severity than on Mary Teresa. Her venerating love for the archbishop who had been her guide through life, the guide of her soul, and the father of her Institute and work, was the deepest earthly feeling in her heart. The relations between a spiritual father and a spiritual child, when they are unbroken through a long life, and when they bind together two souls on fire with the love of God, and occupied in a great work for his service, in which the one is the director and the other the instrument, are more tender and intimate, more firmly riveted, and more constant in their exercise than any others. There is no union like that of union in the work of advancing God's greater glory, and in

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the case of these two chosen souls, the closeness of the bond was enhanced by the continual dependence of the child on the father for guidance in a thousand almost daily details of the work to which he had led her and in which he so constantly supported her. But it was characteristic of the calm, deep reserve which veiled the strongest feelings of her heart that we have no record of the affliction into which this terrible blow must have plunged Mary Teresa; and we have seen how simply she mentions his loss to her correspondent in Canada.

It was not only that she had lost the father and guide of her soul, but the founder and maintainer of her Institute. Dr. Murray's position as archbishop of the diocese in which Rathfarnham lay as well as so many of its dependent houses, was security that there would never be any clash, such as sometimes may occur, between the wishes of the diocesan and the arrangements which Mary Teresa might make as superior of her Institute; and also, that in any trouble which might arise, either from without or from within, she might always reckon upon his support. Few, indeed, are the religious communities which are not, from time to time, visited by some difficulties in which there is need of great prudence, and in which much

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must depend on the cordial understanding and harmony between a religious superior and an ecclesiastical prelate, and the Institute at Rathfarnham had hitherto been altogether without any experience of such incidents. At the time of Dr. Murray's death, the future was a blank to the community over which he had watched as a father. It soon turned out, as might have been foretold, that his successor proved himself a true friend, and the value of the work of the Institute has always been acknowledged by the ecclesiastical superiors everywhere. But the absolute dependence of Mary Teresa on Dr. Murray for security as to this most vital point, could not but have added seriously to the severity of the blow which had now struck her to the ground. Mary Teresa's heart was far too sensitive not to feel with extreme keenness the sorrow which left her and her Institute alike orphans in this world. But her holy guide had long trained her to that union with God and with His adorable will which was so remarkably prominent among the many high virtues which characterised them both. This union cannot but bring confidence for the future, at the same time that it consoles the heart in which it reigns under present affliction. Mary Teresa received calmly and sweetly the many

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condolences and letters of sympathy which were offered or sent to her. She made but one request, which was at once granted by those who had the arrangement of affairs after the death of the archbishop. She begged that Rathfarnham might possess the heart of him who had always been its father. On Passion Sunday this treasure was sent to her, and it now remains in a silver urn in the sacristy of the church.

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CHAPTER XV.

Last Foundations.

THE loss of Archbishop Murray did not produce any relaxation in the fervent zeal which Mary Teresa brought to the government of her existing convents and to the propagation of the Institute by new foundations. She was to mourn her holy guide and father for eight years, and these were years not less fruitful than any which had preceded them. It was inevitable that the change of circumstances should produce more than one severe trial and poignant sorrow. No Institute of the class to which that of the Blessed Virgin belongs, has ever been able to spread itself into various dioceses and distant countries without finding the exercise of its central authority occasionally liable to a severe strain. Few things are more wonderful in the Church of God than the sweet but strong spirit which holds together the members of her Orders under the yoke of voluntary obedience, which preserves intact the

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functions of superiors of different degrees, and keeps the whole working of the system of religious discipline from clashing with the ordinary ecclesiastical authorities. It is far less wonderful that difficulties should occasionally arise than that they should arise so seldom, and that it should so constantly be seen that they can be successfully dealt with. While Dr. Murray lived it was hardly possible that Mary Teresa should have any great experience of troubles of this kind. If in the subsequent years of her life she was not free from such experience, she only shared the lot common to servants of God, who have done the same work and filled the same responsible position with her. A perfect observer of obedience herself, and a member of an Institute of which obedience is the main principle, she was likely, both from character and from conviction, to be serious and even unyielding in exacting its observance by others. No character less firm than hers could have moulded the Institute so thoroughly upon this principle, her insistance on which was as sure to provoke occasional difficulties as it was necessary in order to instil her own spirit into the body over which she had to rule. The annals of her life do not require that the occasions on which she

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met with some opposition should be specially recorded, as they had but little influence on the ultimate history of the Institute. It is enough to say that trials of this kind were not wanting to her, as soon as she had to govern more entirely without the constant assistance of her spiritual father, and that she met them all with that tranquil resolution which had now for a long time taken the place of the nervous shrinking from responsibility, of which we have seen traces in her correspondence with the Archbishop before she left York.

Dr. Murray's successor, Archbishop, and afterwards Cardinal, Cullen, was installed at Dublin at the end of June, 1852, and lost no time in paying his first visit to Rathfarnham in his new capacity. He was gracious and kind in the extreme, went all over the convent, speaking in his simple, fatherly way to all, and expressing his delight at the work. Soon after he confirmed a number of the pupils, and was present at the annual distribution of prizes. Before this Mary Teresa had already begun to enlarge the number of her foundations. Up to this time she had not in Ireland gone beyond the province of Leinster; but it was time to include the other provinces within the range of her opera-

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tions. It seems that at the time of which we are speaking there was but one Catholic educational establishment for ladies in the whole province of Connaught. An estate at Lough Cooter, in Galway, the property of Lord Gort, was at that time for sale under the provisions of the Encumbered Estates Act; and this was puchased in May, 1852, by Mary Teresa, for the sum of £17,000. The house was very fine, and had a large demesne attached to it—too large, as it turned out, for the Sisters to manage. The property had all the usual features of tenements, cottages, offices, plantations, and the like, and its owners had in consequence a large amount of secular business to attend to. Possession was taken of the castle on the 7th June; Mass was celebrated the following day, and St. Joseph and St. Bride chosen as the patrons of the new Loretto. As usual, Mary Teresa went herself to the new foundation, and laboured hard in papering and preparing the rooms. The castle had a large hall, which seemed almost designed for a church, and it was embellished by a stained-glass window. The shadow of the cross fell on the new foundation at once, though it was not destined to remain long in existence as a convent of the Institute. It had been

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intended to consecrate the church at once, and the day had been fixed; but when all was ready, a holy young priest, who was to assist the Bishop of Kilfenora at the consecration, fell ill and died within a few days. Thus it came about that the consecration, which would have made it so difficult to allow the hall to be again used for ordinary purposes, was put off.

Notwithstanding the difficulties which beset the management of so large a property, Mary Teresa, who had placed the Sisters in this new foundation, laboured for some time to make it succeed. A Day-School for ladies was opened soon after the installation of the Sisters; and in August they began to receive boarders. A Poor-School was soon added. A part of the land of the estate was let to various tenants. Notwithstanding a very favourable offer for the whole, which was made in the summer of the next year, Mary Teresa, conscious as she was of the difficulties of the work, refused to resell the estate. At length, a few weeks later, she gave way, and Lough Cooter passed into the hands of Lord Gough, in August, 1854.

Fermoy, in the diocese of Cloyne, was the next place to receive a colony of nuns from Rathfarnham. Indeed, the colony had been despatched

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during the experiment at Lough Cooter. The diocese of Cloyne was at that time under the rule of a very energetic man—Dr. Timothy Murphy —who had enriched Fermoy with a whole army, as it might almost be called, of religious and ecclesiastical institutions. Among the works of his zeal was a convent, which he had built before he had quite settled who were to be its inhabitants. His diocese was much in need of educational establishments for ladies, and he first invited the Congregation of the Sacred Heart, then newly introduced into Ireland, to take up the work in the new building. Circumstances prevented the ladies of the Sacred Heart from accepting the offer, and Dr. Murphy, who could not wait, wrote at once to Mary Teresa, to ask her to send a colony of her Sisters, and the answer to his letter was the arrival of three nuns at Fermoy. Their names were, Mother Eucharia Dease, sister to the Mary Teresa Dease of whom we have heard so much in connection with the mission of Canada, Mother Camilla Walsh, and Mother de Sales Gaynor. The first-named was appointed Superior of the new foundation. The choice proved to be excellent. Mother Eucharia Dease had entered Rathfarnham as a postulant on April 16, 1848, and had received

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the habit in the September following. She made her profession on September 14, the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, 1850. 'During her five years in the novitiate,' writes the Chronicler of Loretto, 'she was deservedly esteemed and loved by her superiors and sisters, and Mary Teresa felt much confidence in entrusting to her gentle guidance the interests of the new Loretto.' She remained superior at Fermoy for twenty-five years, and died, deeply regretted, on the 24th May, 1879.

The work of the Sisters at Fermoy began in unusual discouragement and difficulty; but the devotedness of the nuns has, for many years, been crowned with the most brilliant success.

Conspicuous amongst the benefactors of this Convent, during its early days, must be mentioned the Presentation nuns, and Miss Dease, sister to Mother Mary Eucharia.

In the May of 1854, Mary Teresa had to mourn for one of those losses which were so painful to her loving heart. Twenty-four years before that time, a lady of the age of fifty had been admitted to the novitiate at Rathfarnham, and, notwithstanding the apparent difficulty which was created by her mature age, she had proved herself a pattern of every religious virtue, and

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especially of the characteristic virtue of the Institute of Our Blessed Lady—the virtue of obedience. This was Mother Mary Gertrude Lambert. Her humility and cheerful submission were remarkable. All offices were alike to her, and she joyfully undertook the lowest duties. She was made superior of the convent at Clontarf, Baymount Castle, of which we have already spoken, for the space of a year, but her health failed under the responsibility, and she was recalled to Rathfarnham, where the remainder of her course was to be spent. She died calmly on the Feast of the Apparition of St. Michael, in the year already named. In the following spring another holy death increased the number of the advocates of Loretto in the other world. This time it was Catharine Conway, in religion Sister Paula. She was one of five children of pious but humble parents; her mother used to place each successive child in one of the wounds of our Divine Saviour, and the wound in the sacred side was the chosen abode of Catharine. From the age of ten years she had but one great desire—to become a religious; and, after many fruitless attempts, she obtained admission as a lay sister at Rathfarnham, in 1845. Her life in religion was comparatively short, as after ten years of

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most faithful and devoted service, she was called to her reward. Her characteristic virtues were simple obedience and purity of intention. She died a holy death, and Mary Teresa, who knelt beside her at the time, begged her, as soon as she had any power with God, to obtain for her some favour of which she was greatly in need, and which she saw no way of obtaining. The favour came speedily and unexpectedly soon after the death of this good lay sister.

Another addition to the number of Loretto convents had been made in the year 1854. This was at Letterkenny, in the diocese of Raphoe. It is said that at the time of this foundation there was not a single religious institution in the whole of Donegal. The Bishop of Raphoe, Dr. M'Gettigan, had long felt the want of some convent devoted to educational purposes in his large diocese. He wished to supply the want in a way characteristic of the well-known zeal of the Irish episcopate—that is, by giving up to the religious who might undertake the work of education in Letterkenny his own house and domain. The house was a beautiful one, and nine acres of land were attached to it. The offer was made in 1853, and it was not acted on till the August of the following year. On the Feast of

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St. Augustine, August 28th, Mother Concepcion Lopez and six other sisters set out for Letterkenny. The following day they were received in a manner more characteristic of ancient devotion and faith than of the coldness of modern times. More than two thousand persons came to meet them, headed by the Bishop himself, and they were led in procession to the church, where the Litany of our Blessed Lady was solemnly sung, to implore a blessing on the new convent, which was dedicated to St. Eunan. This convent has prospered so much that it has been found necessary to add very largely to the original buildings.

The mention of the name of Mother Concepcion Lopez brings us to a point at which we may pause for a short interval, in order to honour one of the most distinguished members of the Institute, who survived almost to the year in which these records are being compiled, as if to impress on a later generation of daughters of the Convent of Rathfarnham the virtues of those who belonged to the period of first beginnings. We may well devote a few pages to the character and history of this holy religious :—

'Concepcion Lopez left Spain, her native land, when she was only nine years old. She was sent to be educated to the Convent of St. Mary's, York, where her mother, Dona Helena Roberts, had been

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at school, and while there was one of the intimate friends of Mother M. Teresa Ball. Dona Helena was devotedly attached to the convent, and that she profited by the care bestowed on her was evident from her exemplary conduct and the lessons she gave her children.

'From Concepcion's first coming to the convent all remarked her fervent piety; and her recollection in the chapel was so striking that seculars, many of whom were allowed to occupy the lower part of the choir, often asked: "Who was this angelic child, who seemed so absorbed in God?"

'She had many struggles with her feelings during the first months of her school life, as she was most passionately attached to her friends, above all, her mother; but the child's high sense of religion turned all these quick, loving sympathies into another channel. When the sister appointed to instruct her told little Concepcion of the end of her creation, and spoke to her of God's love for us, she observed the tears trickling down her cheeks, and on being asked the cause of sorrow, could only answer, "God is so good, God is so good." Thus was the child's heart touched with divine love, though her instructor could but tell her in broken Spanish of the perfections of her Lord.

'At all times her conduct was most exemplary, and young as she was, she never seemed to lose the sense of the presence of God. She soon became a model for her young companions, and her quiet words, "God sees us," often stopped the giddy and thought-

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less when about to do wrong. Her application to study was uniform, her obedience and respect to superiors invariable, whilst she bore with great meekness the little trials of her school life. Though naturally disliking childish games and amusements, she nevertheless joined in them with alacrity, when desired, saying: "This will be one of the sacrifices I promised to make in my morning's meditation." The sister in charge of her correspondence once remarked to her that her letter written in reply to one which announced the approaching visit of her uncle seemed cold and stiff. She replied sweetly: "I am delighted to see my relations, but their visits distract me from my God."

'From early childhood Concepcion felt a strong attraction for the religious state, and as she herself expressed it to one of the religious who possessed her confidence, "she felt a longing to go somewhere where she might do great things for God." Providence, as we shall see, led her steps to a convent of which she had then no knowledge whatever. In the meantime she applied herself with fervour to the fulfilment of her actual duties, and mistresses and companions all agreed in saying that she was ever advancing steadily on the road of perfection.

'After spending some years at St. Mary's, she was removed to the Convent of the Sacred Heart, Rue de Varennes, Paris, where she had the happiness of being received a child of Mary by Père Varin, S.J., and for some time she had the privilege of living under his spiritual direction. After recovering from

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a severe fit of illness she was taken back to Spain, where all admired her improvement in every respect. She spent some years at home, when circumstances afforded her an opportunity of making a heroic sacrifice for God. Overcoming her strong love for home and country, she offered herself as a postulant to Rev. Mother M. Teresa Ball, her mother's early friend, and was by her joyfully accepted.

'She left her beloved country, of which she said some weeks before her death, "You will never know how beautiful Spain is till you go to heaven." The night before leaving she bade her last adieu to her little sleeping brothers and sisters, rose early next morning and set out on her journey, accompanied by her brother, who still lives. She was met in London by her uncle, Mr. Roberts, and was by him confided to the care of a gentleman who was on his way to Dublin. Having arrived there, they were driven by mistake to South Great George's-street, then a very miserable locality; she made an act of resignation, thinking her life was to be spent in that place. However, finding no convent there, they drove to the north side, where, in the House of Mary Immaculate—(Loretto Convent, George's-street, is dedicated to the Immaculate Conception)—Con cepcion received a truly maternal welcome from Mary Teresa, who was waiting to receive her. On the 5th September, 1839, Rev. Mother brought her to Rathfarnham, where she entered the novitiate and assumed the name of Sister Mary Gertrude. She received the holy habit on the 12th November, of the same year, and was professed on the 21st

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October, 1841. It is easy to begin, helped on by the freshness of first fervour, but during the forty years of her life in religion Concepcion persevered in the generosity of her sacrifice, and her interior spirit and union with God, for which she was remarkable even as a child, increased with her years. Her worth was perceived and appreciated by her discerning Superior, and immediately after her profession she was appointed Infirmarian, then Mistress of schools, and, in 1844, local Superior of Dalkey; and as Mother Mary Gertrude was then living, she was henceforth called Mother Mary Concepcion.

'She subsequently governed the houses of Clontarf, Bray, Lough Cooter, and Stephen's-green, was twice mistress of novices, and for the last eleven years of her life was mother-assistant at Loretto Abbey, Rathfarnham, supporting Rev. Mother M. Scholastica Somers in her declining health, and exercising towards the community there and the Sisters in the branch houses immense goodness and charity. Her love and zeal for the Institute, and her fidelity to its least rules were unfailing. In fine, to say she was a true religious implies that she gave constant examples of humility, obedience, charity, much patience, and many other virtues which adorned her advancing years.

'The December of 1879 found our dear Mother M. Concepcion labouring as ever for God, and no thought crossed the mind of any that before the close of the year she would have gone to her eternal reward. In a letter to one of our Sisters in India, written the day of her death, she wrote: "Many

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changes have taken place here; many loved ones have left us for heaven; they are interceding for us. Many more changes will take place. God's ways are wonderful."

'On the 16th of December, she went to Loretto, North Great George's-street, where she was to meet His Grace the Archbishop on business. Before leaving that morning, her repeated protestation was: "I am going to do God's will." His Grace arrived at half-past two, and all being satisfactorily arranged, he took leave of our dear mother, and of the Sisters who had come in to receive his blessing.

'Just at that moment she got the fatal stroke, which was so slight at first that no one suspected the least danger, and, more through precaution than from any apparent necessity, the doctor was sent for. The Sisters insisted on her going to bed, but she was all anxiety to return to Rathfarnham, lest Rev. Mother should be uneasy. When the doctor arrived he immediately saw there was no hope, for to the stroke of apoplexy there was now added paralysis; the priest, therefore, was at once summoned, and she received the last absolution and Extreme Unction. She was conscious, but speechless. Her morning communion had been her viaticum. The confessor and Sisters continued praying round her bed till a few minutes after seven o'clock, when she calmly gave up her beautiful soul to the God Whom she had served so long and so well.'

In the year following the foundation of Letterkenny, Mary Teresa was called on to found

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another convent in the North of Ireland, at Omagh, in the county Tyrone. The undertaking was full of hazard, as the means of the Catholics in that part of Ireland were not quite commensurate to their zeal. However, the foundation was undertaken, and although it had at first many difficulties to contend with, not the least of which was the very poor accommodation afforded by the house in which the work was begun, it ultimately triumphed over all obstacles and was crowned with a large amount of success. The first Superior was Mother Felicitas Murray, a niece of the great Archbishop, and Mary Teresa must have had a special delight in appointing her to so responsible a post. She had soon to build a new and beautiful convent, the erection of which greatly increased the number of pupils, and secured the success of the mission. Mother Felicitas remained at Omagh till her death, in 1876, having entered at Rathfarnham in 1848, and having been professed in 1851.

In 1859, Mary Teresa was invited to send some of her sisters to occupy a convent newly built at Borris-in-Ossory. She accepted the invitation, and the Sisters continued, till some years after her death, to labour with much success in this new field. In the year 1868 their colony was

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transferred to Kilkenny, where the Sisters have now a very flourishing convent and schools.

We have now completed the number of the convents founded directly from Rathfarnham by Mary Teresa, with the exception of that at Killarney, of which we shall speak presently, and of which it may almost be said that she founded it while she was dying. But it must not be forgotten that the foundations of the Institute were not confined to those which proceeded directly from Rathfarnham. We have already mentioned several in India and in Canada, which owed their existence to the zeal of sisters in these countries. In the same way the Convent at Navan, under the energetic rule of Mother Paul Finn, became a source from which other streams flowed. The Convent at Balbriggan was founded from Navan in 1857. The houses at Kidderminster and Leek in England, and at Leith in Scotland, were also offshoots from Navan. Of these the foundations of Kidderminster and Leith had to be abandoned after some years of struggling life.

The year after the foundation at Omagh, 1856, again deprived Mary Teresa of a much loved child. This was Sister Mary Scholastica Clarke, who died on the Feast of St. Michael in that

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year. She had been educated at the school in George's-street, Dublin, and passed from thence to the novitiate. But she was still quite young when her call came. She had always been conspicuous for her willing obedience, even anticipating the wishes of her superiors without waiting for an order. Her talents for teaching were great, and Mary Teresa had fondly hoped to see her enter on a long career of usefulness in the schools. She was sent for a time to Manchester, and while there, having shown signs of failing health, was recalled to Rathfarnham, but in vain. Mary Teresa had soon to acknowledge to herself that she must abandon her cherished wishes and hopes. The young Sister awaited her end in calm and peace. As she felt death approaching, she turned with joy to those near and exclaimed: "I am dying;" then clasping her crucifix, she laid it on her bosom, placed her arms in the form of a cross, and calmly gave up her soul into the hands of our Lord. In the same year Mary Teresa lost another valued friend in the famous Theobald Mathew, the great apostle of temperance for the Irish nation. Letters of his still exist, testifying to his very high esteem and regard for the Superior of Rathfarnham. We mention

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him here as being another in the long list of those from whom she had to part, and whose removal terribly thinned the number of her most valued friends. The time was not so far off when she was herself to leave a blank behind her which it was impossible to fill.

The year 1859 witnessed the death of our dear Sister M. Baptist, daughter of our benefactor, Mr. Christopher M'Donnell. She was a religious of much piety and simplicity, and was especially devoted to the holy souls in Purgatory, whom she called her friends. She died after several months of suffering on the 18th of October, aged fifty-three years

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CHAPTER XVI.

Sunset.

THE foundation of the Convent of Borris-in-Ossory and the death of Sister Mary Baptist M'Donnell bring us nearly to the end of what has to be told of the life of Mary Teresa—a life, the external features of which were so generally uniform, and the sufferings and vicissitudes of which were so ordinarily hidden from the eyes of men. In the year 1860 Mary Teresa entered on the sixty-sixth year of her life, but there was nothing in the state of her health to predict any sudden or speedy end of her career of service in the cause of God and religion. She had once an inflammation of the lungs, but with that exception she seems to have been singularly free from the trials of weak health. Her constitution was strong and her life uniform. Great as was the amount of business of various kinds which pressed upon her, she never complained as if she were overworked, nor did she allow her work to fall into arrears. Her children might well

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hope that many years more would still find her administering with energy and decision the Institute over which she had watched from its infancy in Ireland.

It seems to have been the custom at Rathfarnham, from the earliest years of its existence as a convent, to celebrate with a certain amount of joyous pomp and ceremony the Feast of St. Teresa, the patron saint of the Reverend Mother. Not only was the day, when it came round, observed at Rathfarnham itself, but it was made the occasion for the Sisters in the other convents to unite themselves in the happy remembrance of the great debt which they all owed to Mary Teresa. Dr. Murray, while alive, used to join in the celebration, and usually, if possible, made the day of the great saint of Avila the occasion of the consecration to God of some of the spiritual children of the Institute. These ceremonies of clothing and profession gave the purest and deepest delight to his heart and that of his spiritual daughter. He used to ask her, some time before, "Teresa, have you any souls for me to consecrate to God?"[1]

[1] Among the very few letters or notes from Dr. Murray to Mary Teresa which have been preserved, there is one which

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In the year of which we are now speaking, 1860, the ceremonies of clothing and profession had been anticipated, and were not performed on the feast of St. Teresa. But the day seemed particularly and exceptionally joyful. Many visitors came to join the nuns of Rathfarnham in the devotions to which the morning was given. Mass was sung at eleven, and the famous Father Thomas Burke, O.P., delivered the panegyric of St. Teresa. The afternoon brought round the usual performance of a sacred drama

seems to have been written on one of the feast days of St. Teresa. Unfortunately it is without precise date:—

'*Monday Morning*

'Though your affectionate father in Jesus Christ was not present in body, he was no less in mind and heart and soul; and at six he joined in invoking the Holy Spirit to fill his devoted Teresa with a profusion of choicest graces and gifts. At eight he means to offer up the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass in her chapel for the same intention, and with a full confidence that he was not forgotten when she made her morning sacrifice. He again begs a share in her powerful prayers, on this thrice-happy and thrice-privileged day, for himself and flock, and remains as ever, in the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary,

'Her truly affectionate father and sincere friend,

'✠ D. MURRAY.'

This note must have been written early in the morning, before the Archbishop said his Mass, and it seems to refer to her usual morning offering of herself at the beginning of her meditation, which would be made with intenser fervour and joy on the feast of her great patron.

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by the children of the boarding-school. The subject this year was the Martyrdom of St. Catharine. Unusual pains had been taken with the music and decorations, and the spirit in which the performance was carried out made the visitors remark that the children had caught the infection of sacrifice from their teachers. A day of more unalloyed happiness had never been known at Rathfarnham.

The next day Mary Teresa rose to her usual work, and went to Dublin and Clontarf to visit her two convents of the Immaculate Conception and St. Joachim. On the same day arrived a special messenger, sent by Dr. Moriarty, the Bishop of Kerry, earnestly requesting her to send, as soon as possible, a colony of her nuns to Killarney. He had just become the purchaser of a large hotel at that place, and he destined it for the educational convent which his diocese so much required. He had long lived in Dublin as one of the Superiors of All Hallows College, and thus Mary Teresa was well known to him. She replied to his proposal by an immediate acceptance, subject to the approbation of the Archbishop; but before Dr. Moriarty could himself reach Dublin to complete the arrangements, she was struck down by the

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accident which ultimately led to her death. The arrangements, however, were concluded without any delay, and six nuns were sent to Killarney within a few weeks of the first proposal.

Mary Teresa was leaving the refectory as usual after the evening meal of that day, when her foot slipped in the stone passage near the kitchen, and she fell heavily on the ground. As she fell, she endeavoured to save her head from dashing itself on the flags, and this effort made her turn on her side, and a compound fracture of the hip bone was the result. The surgeons also thought that she must have received some internal injury at the moment of the fall. She was lifted up tenderly by the Sisters who were following her, and her first exclamation was one of thankfulness to God for having saved her from a sudden death. She thanked the Sisters very warmly, and was carried as gently as possible to the community room, where she lay quiet while a messenger was sent for the doctor. All this time she was in intense pain.

The year before this, Father Burke, who has already been mentioned, had given the annual retreat to the nuns at Rathfarnham, and had



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since been officiating as the confessor of the community. He now hastened to the bedside of Mary Teresa, and continued to support and cheer her by almost daily visits till within a short time of her death. That death, however, was still many months distant. At first, after the examination, the surgeons gave some hope of actual recovery. Heaven was besieged by prayer for so dear and valuable a life, not only in the Convent of Rathfarnham and the other convents of the congregation, but in all the churches in Dublin and in many elsewhere. Masses without number and novenas were offered; a novena of Masses was procured at the famous shrine of *Notre Dame des Victoires* in Paris. There seemed, as has been said, some hope at first; for a few days, Mary Teresa was able to a certain extent to attend to her business, having her letters read to her and dictating replies. In less than a week, however, the sisters were startled by the opinion of an eminent physician, Sir Henry Marsh, that their Mother could not survive many days. The prediction was strangely falsified. Sir Henry was in perfect health at the time of his visit to Rathfarnham, but in a few weeks he was himself in the grave. Mary Teresa had as yet many months of suffering before her.

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Her suffering was to be indeed intense, and of various kinds. The surgical treatment was most severe; the torture was renewed at every visit of the medical men, but the closed eyes and motionless form of the sufferer gave no indication of her feelings, and she invariably took leave of the doctors with a kind word or two of thanks. Yet these practised men shuddered at the mention of the pains which they were forced to inflict on her; and one of them, a Protestant, is said to have turned aside to hide his tears, wondering at her extraordinary patience when she had to undergo burning to the bone. Besides these great bodily pains from the treatment itself, Mary Teresa suffered most poignantly in another way—her strength was so severely drawn upon, that it became necessary to administer restoratives every hour, and she was thus, after years of daily communion, deprived of the consolation and support of the Blessed Sacrament. But the curate of the parish, Rev. P. Hanley, kindly bethought him of the expedient which is sometimes resorted to in such cases, and administered Holy Communion to her soon after midnight. Shortly after, the Archbishop, Cardinal Cullen, who frequently visited her, gave orders that Mass

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should be celebrated in her room, and she had thus the constant delight of assisting at the adorable Sacrifice.

Thus several weeks passed on, till in the early days of December a gleam of hope came, and it was known in the convent that Mary Teresa was so far recovered as to be able to resume the recitation of her daily office and to listen with enjoyment to the reading of the lives of the Saints. The day was even sanguinely named when she might be able to sit up, the fractured limb being now sufficiently healed. The Feast of the Translation of the Holy House of Loretto was fixed for this joyful effort. But when the effort had been made, a deadly faintness overpowered her, and it was the same when the experiment was repeated. From the moment of the accident, in consequence of the fracture of the bone, her foot had been entirely helpless and required to be supported by bandages. She had absolutely no power over it, and in any change of position, it had to be lifted to its place with great torture to her. The infirmarian was directed on these occasions to watch her countenance, in order that she might stop if the pain became too great to bear. But no alteration was ever to be traced in her face; she showed the increase

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of pain only by a more fervent invocation of the holy name of Jesus.

In this state of things, Christmas came round, the day of so much holy and domestic joy to communities of religious, the day especially honoured in the convents of the Institute. This year there could be no festivities of the usual sort, except for the children, who could not be cheated of their yearly happy hours. The new year dawned, and its first weeks were marked by a sinking of strength in Mary Teresa, which in the opinion of the doctors signified danger. On learning this, she at once asked earnestly that the last sacraments might be given to her. Archbishop Cullen undertook himself to administer them, waiting a day, in order that the superiors of the other houses in the archdiocese might have the opportunity of being present. It was after this that, finding her strength waning without hope of recovery, he appointed Mother Mary Scholastica Somers to take her place as the Superior of the Community. Henceforth Mary Teresa was to be relieved of all care, except that joyful and solemn care of preparing to meet her God.

On the afternoon of the first of February, her mind seemed slightly to wander, and she found

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some difficulty in expressing herself to those who watched beside her bed. She soon recovered from this attack, although while it lasted, it seemed as if the Feast of the Purification was to be kept by her in the next world.

But as yet the end was not nigh; the crisis passed, and then Mary Teresa desired to see each sister, and to give her some parting word or token of love. It was found however that she had nothing to give. Her books and desk were searched almost in vain. Even her rosary was so changed by frequent repairs that only two decades of the original beads remained. "You will value them," she said to the infirmarian, "though they are not worth offering, being of so many different kinds, but the medal attached to them was in a Catholic family for a hundred years. It was given for my use at York." The search for little objects which might do duty as presents and mementos, revealed her examen board in her *priedieu*, marked the forenoon of the day on which her accident occurred.

There was living at Rathfarnham one of the first two novices who had joined the infant community. This was Sister Mary Bernard Blake, who had been a pupil at York while Mary Teresa was there in her preparation for her work in

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Ireland. As a girl she had formed a great attachment to Mary Teresa, and on her return from school, had lost no time in joining her at Rathfarnham. Thus she had been in religion for a number of years not far short of that of Mary Teresa herself. It seems as if the blow which struck down the one was also fatal to the other. Sister Mary Bernard could not bear up against the illness and suffering which she now witnessed, for the first time, in her who had so long been her Mother in religion. She died on the Holy Saturday of this spring. All communication between the infirmary in which she lay on her sick-bed, and the room in which Mary Teresa was suffering, had been interdicted. Still the latter was consumed by anxiety after her loving child. She herself had slept a few hours that day. But she woke up to ask eagerly whether her own attendant had seen Sister Mary Bernard. The Sister hesitated, and Mary Teresa immediately understood that Mary Bernard was dead. The shock fell on a frame utterly weakened, and without any power of resistance to a sudden and deep impression, and she gave way to uncontrollable grief, violent sobs shaking her whole frame, while she exclaimed again and again: "Oh! why had I not her near me to die!" Tears came to her relief,

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and in a hour's time those who saw her were filled with wonder at her peace and calm, as she spoke to Mother Scholastica Somers of the virtues of the lately departed Sister, and of the need that was pressing on the community for the formation of a new cemetery, the little grave-yard hitherto used being small and in an inconvenient situation. Thus it was that, immediately on Mary Bernard's death, measures were taken for preparing a large cemetery in a place to which all could easily go, when they desired to pray for their departed Sisters.

An anecdote of this sad, but most peaceful time, records how Mary Teresa told one of the Sisters who was watching by her side the story of the holy Superior of the convent at York, who turned, just as she was breathing out her soul, to the Sister who she thought would succeed her in her office, and begged her to teach the Sisters to suffer before they came to die. It seems as if just at the time when the Church was rejoicing for the blessed tidings of Easter in that year, Mary Teresa was visited by an extreme form of trial. This was the withdrawal of all sensible consolation with which, up to this time, her soul had been flooded. During Easter week a great restlessness was added to her other suf-

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ferings. She had now been six months on her bed of pain, and all that time she had preserved an angelic calm. It was her character through life to be tranquil, serene, dignified, unruffled, and now, as if to give her fresh occasion for humility, she had to struggle in utter weakness against this overmastering anguish. "I am with him in tribulation!" was now her favourite ejaculation; or, "O Jesus, love of my soul, have mercy on me!" And that nothing might be wanting to her cross, she became so sick as to be unable to receive Holy Communion. One morning, hungering for the treasure of her soul, of which she had now for some days been deprived, she craved most pitifully to be allowed to communicate. She could only be safe against sickness by remaining absolutely motionless for a considerable space of time, and this, in her present state, required almost superhuman efforts. The infirmarian reminded her of this; but she promised to lie entirely still, and her promise was accepted and fulfilled. Communion was given to her, and she lay for half an hour in thanksgiving so tranquil that even her breathing was scarcely to be heard. She seemed lost in a transport of joy and love. Then she broke the long silence with the exclamation, "Oh, what bliss! Never

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since my first communion have I felt anything like this!"

May came, the gracious month of Mary, which she had ever delighted to consecrate to the honour of the Queen of Angels, and then her children thought that it would be a relief and joy to her if she could be removed to the window of her room, and see the long procession of nuns and girls winding its way to the grotto of Our Lady in the grounds. It was a passing gleam of light in the poor fevered existence which she now led. The sun shone brightly ere it set, and sweet voices rang softly through the quiet evening air, almost as if they came from paradise itself. Weak as she was, her countenance showed how she enjoyed that short respite. Then her pain returned. She had always prayed that her purgatory might be granted her in this life, and her prayer seems to have been signally answered. But she had not desired purgatory on earth without arming herself, by the most constant and universal self-denial, for the conflict and trial of patience which such a boon requires. No word of complaint escaped her lips.

Strange as it may seem, after so many months of suffering and utter inability to move, Mary

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Teresa was not to breathe out her soul in the Convent of Rathfarnham. Early in May, it was decided that a change of air should be tried, which might, perhaps, prolong the life which was so precious to all, though it could not now be hoped that any human or earthly means could restore her to health. She had always loved the Convent at Dalkey, on account, it seems, of its beautiful situation, and it was to this chosen spot that she was now to be carried. On a bright spring day she was placed carefully in a carriage, the doctors giving orders that it should stop every ten minutes, in order that her sufferings might be less. It was like a funeral procession when her sorrowing children streamed out of the doors of Rathfarnham to follow her to the gate. No one could hope to see her return.

The drive is not long. On the way Mary Teresa was able to point out to her companions objects and places of interest. She passed the humble dwelling which had been the school at which her father and guide, Dr. Murray, had received the first elements of education. But as they went on, the infirmarian was anxious to know how things were as to the comfort or discomfort of her charge. Father Burke, her confessor, had laid an injunction on Mary Teresa

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to make no concealment about her sufferings. The infirmarian asked her where she suffered most? She answered that she suffered most from the position in which she had been placed. Then it was found, on the stoppage of the carriage, that the friction occasioned by its motion had so displaced the dressings on her feet, that the raw sores had been brought into contact with the rough woollen linings of the cushions on which her feet were placed. To the sorrowful expressions of the infirmarian she answered by her usual sweet smile, thus giving to the end an example of silent suffering.

It has already been said that the convent at Dalkey, small in size, and removed from the many various occupations of Rathfarnham, as well as beautifully situated by the mountains and the sea, had been a favourite place of sojourn to Mary Teresa. When she entered the house on this last occasion, she raised her eyes and implored the blessing of God on all its inmates. The next night she slept well, and in the morning was unusually tranquil; but when a priest who had come to see her was taken to her bedside, she said to him, "Father, I am dying." She made her last communion on the Tuesday after the Ascension. After that time her suffer-

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ings seemed to become most intense, but some little respite was granted on the application of a fresh remedy. On the Friday afternoon an unmistakable change took place; death now appeared close at hand. On that last evening she dictated a message to Mother M. Scholastica Somers, who was at Rathfarnham, and seemed a little anxious that it should be sent at once, without waiting till the morning; but she was quieted when the infirmarian told her that the good mother would come herself to see her again. As she lay thus on the Friday evening, some of the Sisters who had not yet seen her since her arrival at Dalkey came in one by one to visit her, kneeling by her bedside. Few words could pass, for her strength was almost gone. To one of these she was just able to whisper, "My child, strive to be a saint; nothing but sanctity will be of any avail."

Friday night passed away in anxious watching. She broke the silence once, to ask for extreme unction, and she was told that Father Burke would administer it in the morning. "I am quite contented," she said. He came very early and found her asleep. "I shall begin the holy sacrifice," he said; "for sleeping or waking her heart is with the Lord." She awoke about a

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quarter of an hour after he had finished Mass, feeling extremely ill. His presence, as always throughout this long illness, consoled her at once. The community were summoned, and the holy rite administered in their presence. Before giving her the last absolution, the Father asked her if she was sorry for all the sins of her whole life, and for everything by which she might have offended God? "Indeed I am." She received the last rites with an ineffable joy, as appeared from the almost supernatural brightness of her countenance; for she said nothing, only at intervals murmuring the words, "I am very unworthy, I am very unworthy."

This last day of her life was to be marked by a sacrifice, such as one like herself alone could fully appreciate. All through her illness, as has been said, she had leant with childlike confidence on the help of her spiritual father, Father Burke. Now, on this last Saturday, he had received an order from his superior to go to a distant part of the country for a few days. The obedience was hard to him, but harder to her. She had long desired that he might be with her at her last passage. What she desired was not to be granted. That last passage must be sanctified by this extreme refinement of suffering.

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Knowing the strong soul with whom he had to deal, he told her what was to be. "Mother," he said, "duty calls me away. Will you give me leave to go?" For a moment a look of intense pain overspread the face of the poor sufferer; but immediately after she said quietly, "Yes, Father, do what is right." He spoke a few words of comfort and sympathy, and then prepared to go. Again her looks betrayed the pain of her soul. She called him back as many as three times for some last words, and then he went. She turned to Mother M. Scholastica, who was now acting as Superior, and whispered twice, "The labourer is worthy of his hire;" meaning that the good Father was to have his expenses paid him for the journey. She was understood, and gave a sweet smile of gratitude.

At six o' clock that evening the fever increased, and it was thought that even the slight exertion which she made in uttering ejaculations and prayers from time to time was too much for her. When the time for the greater silence observed in religious houses came at nine the infirmarian warned her, and she became at once perfectly silent, and sank into a deep sleep; it lasted for nearly twelve hours. At nine in the morning of the Feast of Pentecost, a feast always dear to

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her on account of her great devotion to the Holy Ghost, she woke up with the words, "O Jesus!" The hue of death was on her face, and she gave a shudder of agony; but this passed, and for eight hours more she lay quiet with an indulgenced crucifix in her hand. The curate of the parish, Rev. P. MacCabe, came again to give her absolution, and to recite the prayers for the agonising, until the bell called him away to celebrate the parish Mass. It was now wearing on to mid-day, and her spiritual children, kneeling beside her, expected her summons every hour. But she was to have one more visit, one more waking up for a moment.

The last retreat she ever made had been preached in September, 1860, by Father Fortescue, of the Society of Jesus, and Mary Teresa had gained much consolation from it. During her illness this Father had often visited her, and celebrated Mass in her room; but he was sent away to give missions in various parts of the country before she was removed to Dalkey. He told her at the end of the retreat that she was to have a very happy death. She had parted from him more than once, as he went and came back to Dublin; but she had expressed the wish to see him once more. That week he

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was unexpectedly recalled to Dublin, and a friend whom he met by chance in the street told him that Mary Teresa was better, and had been removed to Dalkey. Hardly knowing why, he set out on that Feast of Pentecost for Dalkey, where she was then actually in her agony. He was taken to her side, and on seeing her, he said, "We can only help her by prayer, her soul is past human sight or sound." But he remembered her desire to speak with him again, and how strangely he had been brought to Dalkey that day; so he bent over her and uttered a fervent aspiration. She remained motionless. He whispered again, "Mother, I am come to assist you; give me some sign that you know me, and I will give you absolution." She seemed to wake up, and gave an unequivocal sign of recognition. After he had pronounced absolution, she again relapsed into her seeming unconsciousness. In the afternoon Father Mac Cabe came once more to give absolution. Up to five o'clock the community kept praying aloud by her side; then the bell rang for lecture, and the greater number withdrew to perform that duty. A few remained with Mother M. Scholastica Somers, who was kneeling by her side. Mary Teresa's countenance was now full of joy; she seemed

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to feel that the end was come; she cast a look of love and happiness on the mother kneeling by her. After a time Mother M. Scholastica began to recite Vespers aloud. All went on quietly till she reached the beginning of the *Magnificat*. At the words, '*Magnificat anima mea Dominum,*' Mary Teresa seemed to catch the blessed and familiar strain, and with one more steadfast and inexpressibly joyful look at her successor in her charge, she breathed out her soul.

Though Dalkey was the place in which Mary Teresa died, it was not to retain her remains. A tablet has been erected there by the loving veneration of her religious children; but it does not designate the place of her rest. The Sisters at Dalkey were charged with the mournful task of notifying to the convents of the Order in Ireland, the decease of the common mother of all. The next morning, therefore, Whit-Monday, spread the news almost all over the country. In the forenoon the remains of Mary Teresa were placed in a coffin and carried reverently to Rathfarnham. The Sisters met the funeral carriage at the door, and Mary Teresa was at once laid in the church which she had herself built to

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the honour of God, the church on which her devotion had lavished all its tenderness, in which she spent so many hours in prayer and adoration before the altar she had herself raised. They lifted the coffin lid once more to behold the face which they had loved to gaze on in life, and they found it not less beautiful in death than in life. The serene sweetness, which had been its wonted charm, was still there, intensified by the touch of death. The children clung round the coffin without fear; the little ones were glad to be lifted up that they might again kiss the good mother.

The Requiem Mass was sung on the Wednesday after Pentecost; Cardinal Cullen himself officiated, and a large number of ecclesiastics formed the choir. Then a procession was formed to carry the remains to the new cemetery—the cemetery which had been planned by Mary Teresa herself, in her conversation with Mother M. Scholastica, after the death of Sister Mary Bernard. Nuns and children walked in that procession, which was swollen by Sisters who had come from the various filiations to join their Sisters at Loretto. They took their places round the enclosure, and then, when the coffin was brought to the spot by the bearers, a number of priests

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stepped forward and laid it with their own hands in the tomb. A handsome granite Irish cross is now raised over the spot where Mary Teresa sleeps in the midst of her loving children. When the 'month's mind' came the church was again thronged, the Mass again sung, and the most eloquent of modern Irish preachers, her friend and confessor, Father Thomas Burke, spoke the words of comfort and encouragement which were so much needed by the hearts of those whom she had loved so well, and taught so well to love the God whom she and they were called to serve by the solemn consecration of religion.

The calm though energetic life which has been traced in these pages will always be one of the glories of the Ireland of the nineteenth century, nor will any history of the great revival of religion in that long-afflicted land be complete without some account of the work which has been done by the Sisters of Loretto. But it is also worthy of remark, that the present century has elsewhere also witnessed a great spread and development of the glorious Institute of which the Convent of Rathfarnham and its offshoots form but a part. Few Institutes in the Church deserve to be known better than the Institute of the Blessed Virgin. The seed first planted

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amid storms and persecutions by a few English ladies, who had to fly from their country and homes in order to worship God in peace in a distant land, lay long half-hidden in the ground, but with its original vitality only strengthened by its obscurity. The idea of the Institute is in truth the same which, long after, gave birth to the many congregations of ladies who have dedicated themselves to the education of their own sex since the great French Revolution. The seventeenth century was less propitious to the rapid development of such an Institute than the nineteenth. 'So is the kingdom of God,' said our Lord in one of His parables, 'as if a man should cast seed into the earth, and should sleep and rise, night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up whilst he knoweth not. So the earth of itself bringeth forth fruit, first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear.' The seed in this case lay a long time under the ground; but when it shot forth it showed a strength of growth well fitted to stand amid all the inclemencies of weather which awaited it. While the 'English Virgins' were winning for themselves the affections of the good Bavarian people among whom they were so long sheltered and protected, the Convent at

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York was standing against many a storm at home. Among all the beautiful histories of olden time, which are yet to be revealed to the English and Irish Catholics of our day, none will be more consoling than the Annals of the Convent at Micklegate Bar, which has been for so long, and which still remains, one of the loveliest fruits of English Catholicism. Itself content to forego many opportunities of enlarging its sphere of action by filiations, it has remained, all the more from that circumstance, the home of holy traditions, and of that strict, regular observance which is the delight of heaven and the silent support of the Church on earth. In nothing in all his famous episcopate was Dr. Murray more happily guided, than in his determination to seek in this pure and tranquil home the highest and truest principles of the religious life for his own two foundations of the Sisters of Charity and of Rathfarnham.

If the holy and severe traditions of the 'English Virgins' have done so much for these two religious Institutes, if they secured to their members the inestimable blessings of sound and solid spiritual formation and of participation in the merits, labours, instincts, and spirit of so many generations of strong and noble souls, whose

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virtue was fortified by the blasts of adversity and suffering, it must still be said that the genial, loving, and impulsive Irish character has also had its essential part in producing the great fruits which have come from the works begun by Mary Aikenhead and Frances Ball. To speak of the Sisters, commonly called of Loretto, those who know them best are the loudest in their praises of their zeal, their devotion to the duties of their vocation, their noble obedience, their faithful observance, their interior spirit. The root has struck deep, and now the time has come for abundance of branches, and leaves, and fruit. What that abundance is, as far as it can be gathered from a dry enumeration of names, may be, in some measure, learnt from the table, with which this chapter may well conclude, of the various houses of the Institute, which, as is well known, was confirmed as such by Pius IX., only a few years ago. A century ago, the houses in Bavaria and Austria were comparatively few, and there was in England only the convent at York. At the beginning of the present century, after their secularisation by Napoleon, the English house was unable to keep up its communication with the mother house at Munich, since transferred to Nymphenburg, and was placed by the

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Pope under the Vicar-Apostolic of the district. The only English house which now retains active dependence on Nymphenburg is the convent in England-lane, Haverstock-hill. But a true spirit of sisterly love animates the whole Order, and there is probably but very little diversity among the methods of observance of the original Rule. The very great increase of the Institute abroad has taken place since the beginning of the present century.

HOUSES OF THE ENGLISH INSTITUTE OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY IN BAVARIA.

(With Filials included.)

Mother House,	..	*Nymphenburg.*
Filials,	..	Aibling.
,,	..	Berg.
,,	..	Bruck.
,,	..	Blutenberg.
,,	..	Deggendorf.
,,	..	Eichstätt.
,,	..	Furth.
,,	..	Haag.
,,	..	Munich,
,,	..	Pasing.
,,	..	Reichenhall.
,,	..	Teisendorf.
,,	..	Tittmaning.
,,	..	Traunstein.
,,	..	Trostberg.
,,	..	Walpertskirchen.

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Filials (cont.)	..	Wasserburg.
,,	..	St. Zeno.
Mission—Filials,	..	*Bukarest, in Wallachia* (3 very large Houses).
,,	..	Allahabad, India.
,,	..	Bankipore, ,,
,,	..	Patna, ,,
,,	..	Bettiah, ,,
,,	..	Naini-Tal, ,,
Mother House,	..	*Augsburg.*
Filial,	..	Weilheim.
Mother House,	..	*Altötting.*
Filials,	..	Birnbach.
,,	..	Damenstift.
,,	..	Hengersberg.
,,	..	Hofkirchen.
,,	..	Karpfham.
,,	..	Neuötting.
,,	..	Pfarrkirchen.
,,	..	Rotthalmünster.
,,	..	Triftern.
Mother House,	..	*Aschaffenburg.*
Filials,	..	Grossostheim.
,,	..	Würzburg.
Mother House,	..	*Bamberg.*
Filials,	..	Amlingstadt.
,,	..	Ebing.
,,	..	Hirschaid.
,,	..	Kissingen.
,,	..	Nürnberg.
,,	..	Strullendorf.
Mother House,	..	*Burghausen.*
Filials	..	Aigen.

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Filials (cont.)	..	Landau.
,,	..	Neuhaus.
,,	..	Simbach.
Institute House,	..	*Günzburg,* without filials.
,,	..	Kempten, ,,
,,	..	Lindau, ,,
Mother House,	..	*Mindelheim,* ,,
Filials,	..	Klosterwald, ,,
,,	..	Wallerstein, ,,
Institute House,	..	*Neuburg,* without filials.
Mother House,	..	*Passau.*
Filials,	..	Bischofsmais.
,,	..	Frauenau.
,,	..	Fürstenstein.
,,	..	Izstadt.
,,	..	Kirchberg.
,,	..	Schönberg.
,,	..	Waldkirchen.
,,	..	Wegscheid.
,,	..	Zwisel.
Institute House,	..	*Schrobenhausen,* without filial.

HOUSES OF THE INSTITUTE IN AUSTRIA, HUNGARY, AND ITALY.

Mother House,	..	*St. Pölten*
Institute Houses	..	Krems, Prague, Pest,
,,	..	Ballassa, Erlan, Gyarmath.
,,	..	Vezprem, Vicenza,
,,	..	Roveredo, Brixen,
,,	..	Meran, Lodi, Biella.

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HOUSES IN PRUSSIA AND DARMSTADT.

Institute Houses,	..	Mainz, Würms, Bingen.
,,	..	Rudesheim, Darmstadt, and others.

HOUSES IN ENGAND.

,,	..	York (under the Bishop).
,,	..	Haverstock-hill, London.

HOUSES OF THE IRISH BRANCH OF THE INSTITUTE OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY.

Mother House,	..	*Loretto Abbey, Rathfarnham.*
Filials,	..	Stephen's-green.
,,	..	North Great George's-street.
,,	..	Dalkey.
,,	..	Gorey.
,	..	Balbriggan.
,,	..	Bray.
,,	..	Kilkenny.
,,	..	Killarney.
,,	..	Letterkenny.
,,	..	Wexford.
,,	..	Enniscorthy.
,,	..	Navan.
,,	..	Omagh.
,,	..	Fermoy.
,,	..	Youghal.
,,	..	Manchester.
,,	..	Leek.

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Filials,	..	*Calcutta, India.*
,,	..	Intally.
,,	..	Hazaribaugh.
,,	..	Assensole.
,,	..	Darjeeling.
,,	..	Lucknow.
,,	..	*Toronto, America.*
,,	..	Hamilton.
,,	..	Guelph.
,,	..	Bond-street.
,,	..	Niagara Falls.
,,	..	Lindsay.
,,	..	Belleville.
,,	..	Stratford.
,,	..	Port Louis, Mauritius.
,,	..	Curepipe, ,,
,,	..	Gibraltar.
,,	..	Ballarat, Australia.
"	..	Pretoria, Africa.

Such is the goodly company of devoted servants of God and His Blessed Mother, in which the children of Frances Teresa Ball form so large a part. Some day, perhaps, the history of this great Institute may be written, and it

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will then be seen, in part, at least, and in that superficial way in which alone it is possible to trace on earth the workings of the Spirit of God in the souls and lives of those who are especially called to the closest union with Him, and to the most continuous labours for His glory in the souls of others, how large have been the blessings shed abroad on the Church by means of those who have followed this Rule. It is enough for us to have endeavoured to draw the picture of one who will ever be honoured as a chief instrument in the propagation of this Institute of the Blessed Mother of God. She did not live to witness its final and crowning ratification at the hands of the supreme authority of the Church. The Rule of the 'English Virgins' was, as is well known, first confirmed by Clement XI., in 1703, at the petition of Maximilian Emanuel, Duke and Elector of Bavaria. The Superior of the 'English Virgins' at that time was Mary Anne Barbara Bapthorpe.

The next step in the story of the Institute is the famous Bull of Benedict XIV., in 1749, *Quamvis Justa*, occasioned by the question between the Bishop of Augsburgh and the community of 'English Virgins' at Hildesheim. Long after this Bull, the Houses in England, as

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well as in Germany, continued under the Rule of the Superior-General at Munich, until the calamities caused by the revolutionary wars and the conquests of Napoleon made it almost impossible to maintain even this connection. In consequence of the difficulties of communication with the Continent, the community of York was placed, by a rescript of Pius VII., under the jurisdiction of the Vicar-Apostolic of the district, and this arrangement has been continued under the hierarchy established by Pius IX. The last and crowning act of the Holy See in favour of this Institute was that of the same Pontiff, Pius XI., who, in 1877, at the petition of the nuns of the House at York, supported by a commendatory letter of their Bishop, Dr. Cornthwaite, approved and solemnly confirmed the Institute itself. This step had not been taken before, as is stated in the letter of the Bishop of Beverley, because it has only of late become the practice of the Holy See to expressly approve a House or Institute of women not bound to enclosure. But the discipline of the Church has been modified in this respect since the times of the great Revolution; and thus it is that the religious of the 'Institute of the Blessed Virgin,' with many other communities of the same kind, have now

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that express approbation which was withheld from their predecessors, notwithstanding his approbation of their Rule, by Clement XI.

The list of the Houses of the Institute in the present day speaks for itself. Its religious are numbered by many thousands, and they are scattered in all parts of the globe. The solid virtue required by the Rule—a Rule embodying the present traditions of the spiritual life—are the great security at once for the unity of the spirit of the various communities, for their interior perfection and the fruitfulness of their labours for souls. There is nothing in these Rules which has not stood the test of long experience and trying afflictions. The faithful observance of the Rules was Mary Teresa's chief aim in her government of her part of the Institute; but her special praise is, that she knew well enough that laws are better enforced by example than by precept, and that her religious children had only to look to her to see how the Rules should be observed, and to catch the spirit of the Institute which she so dearly loved.

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APPENDIX.

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APPENDIX.

IN MEMORIAM.

Sermon Preached by the Rev. Thomas Burke, O.P., June, 1861.

'I have chosen to be an abject in the House of my God rather than to dwell in the tabernacle of sinners.'—(Ps. lxxxiii. 11.)

WHEN the aged Patriarch was asked by the Egyptian king (Gen. xlvii.), 'How many are the days of the years of thy life? He answered—the days of my pilgrimage are a hundred and thirty years: few and evil.' He had lived far beyond the ordinary life of man, for 'the days of our years are threescore and ten years. But if in the strong they be fourscore years: and what is more of them is labour and sorrow.' (Ps. lxxxix.) He had lived in honour and wealth, for though father and mother had forsaken him, and at Bethel he lay down on the cold earth, with a stone for his pillow, yet in a few years the Lord brought him back by the same way of the wilderness 'in two companies,' with oxen, and asses, and sheep, and men servants, and women servants' (Gen. xxxii.); and what is still more, he had lived

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in God's favour, for he said: 'I have seen God face to face, and my soul has been saved.' Is it not strange that such a one, looking back at the close of his life, should have said, 'the days of my pilgrimage are few and evil?' But it was because he looked back upon years that were past and gone that the patriarch spoke thus; for although the hours seem to pass slowly on, yet, when they are gone, there is a littleness in human life which makes us look upon a hundred years as if they were but yesterday. Everything that has an end must appear trifling and contemptible before that which is endless and immortal, and therefore, even if Jacob had lived a thousand years, yet at their close would he say, 'the days of my pilgrimage are few and evil;' for what are a thousand years of life to man?—the first phase of an everlasting existence. What is the first hour of helpless infancy compared with the long life of a man? And yet it is infinitely more than a life of a thousand years compared with the eternity of the human soul.

Viewing life, then, as a thing that ends speedily, for, 'behold, I come quickly,' saith the Lord, we must all exclaim with the holy patriarch: 'the days of my pilgrimage are few and evil.' But there is another point from which we must consider the life of man, and which makes it as great as it is little in itself, so that the shortest life is as important as eternity, and it is this—the condition of our eternity depends upon time. 'The days of our pilgrimage' must decide the all-important question—shall we be happy for ever with God, 'crowned with glory' in His kingdom, or shall we be most unhappy reprobates in hell—for an endless eternity? This is the all-momentous feature of human life—every moment

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may gain or lose an eternity of bliss and of glory. If life did not lead us to God it would be utterly worthless and contemptible; but seeing that it can lead us to God, it becomes at once most important; and as all its importance arises from this alone, it follows that the life truly worth living for, the life truly precious and most desirable, is that which leads most directly and certainly to God, and which secures to man his everlasting life in heaven. Now, such a life, my dear Sisters, is holy religion, which, by giving us to God in time, secures God for us in eternity; which solves the fearful mystery of life in favour of heaven; which makes 'the days of our pilgrimage'—the morning of our imperishable life—a spring-time of a harvest of eternal joy, 'in the morning sow thy seed,' and then, 'coming, thou shalt come with joyfulness, carrying thy sheaves.' And therefore the Holy Fathers tell us that the religious state is an anticipation of heaven, nay, a heaven upon earth; because it is the beginning of an existence which will be continued for ever in heaven; it is the morning of a day which shall never see night, 'and the gates of the holy city shall not be shut by day: for there shall be no night there.' (Apoc. xxi.) Truly then, my Sisters, the grace of religious vocation is the crowning grace of life. Oh! let us cherish it, and love the memory of those who, like angels of God, turned our youthful footsteps to the sanctuary, and received us into the holy places of the Lord.

But as heaven is a place of rejoicing, so the only true joy of earth is to be found in religion. There is no real joy in the world. To understand and prove this sweeping assertion, let us consider the nature of man's mind. The human mind naturally goes

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beyond the present time, because it is spiritual; the present belongs rather to the senses than to the spirit. This is so true, that St. Thomas teaches that the mind, in order to form its ideas, must abstract itself from present sensations. Now, when the mind leaves the present time, it is naturally more inclined to travel into the future than to fall back upon the past. Anticipation seems more natural to the human mind than remembrance. Hence, Almighty God, 'who disposes all things sweetly,' which means, as the Holy Fathers tell us, according to the nature of every being, directs the mind of man more to the future than to the past, and therefore we find in Scripture much more stress laid upon what is to come than what is past. *Memorare novissima* ever rings in our ears. Remember the last end—the things that are to come; and the Apostle describes himself (Philip. iii.) as 'forgetting the things that are behind and stretching forth himself to those that are before.' Now, as joy belongs to the mind, there can be no real joy where this anticipating and apprehensive mind can find danger of future evil or threat of punishment, and in all the pleasures of the world it finds this danger and this threat. It cannot therefore give itself up with confidence to enjoy them. They are denounced by the voice of God, and therefore the wise man says, 'anger is better than laughter,' and 'better to go to the house of mourning than to the house of feasting, for the heart of the wise is where there is mourning, and the heart of fools where there is mirth' (Eccl. vii.), and the Saviour adds, 'Blessed are they that mourn and weep, for they shall be comforted.' But when the soul finds present peace, together with the promise of future

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blessings, then is it filled with exceeding great joy, and such is the joy of religion, for 'godliness is profitable to all things,' says the Apostle (1 Tim. iv.), 'having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come.' Hence the Scripture, which commands worldlings to mourn, and to love sorrow rather than joy, bids religious to rejoice, and to 'serve the Lord in gladness;' and again, 'behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together.' And therefore the Psalmist says: 'One thing I have asked of the Lord, this will I seek after: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life,' for 'I have loved the beauty of thy house, O Lord, and the place where thy glory dwelleth,' and 'I have chosen to be an abject in the house of my God rather than to dwell in the tabernacles of sinners.' (Ps. lxxxiii. ii.)

And how manifold are the joys of holy religion! The hidden, deep consolation and peace which prayer, even in time of aridity, if honestly performed, brings with it. The joy of obedience, which frees us from all responsibility before our conscience and before God. The joy of mutual good example, which makes all religious observances so sweet and easy. The joy of promise, even in chastisement and reproof; for, says the Apostle (Heb. xii.), 'All chastisement for the present indeed seemeth not to bring with it joy but sorrow: but afterwards it will yield, to them that are exercised by it, the most peaceable fruit of justice.' These and many others are the joys of religion, my Sisters, but there is one source of joy, peculiar to religious, of which I would fain speak more particularly to-day. A great living author,[1] himself a

[1] F. Lacordaire. 'Memorial.'

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religious, says, 'the greatest happiness man can know in this world is to meet, even once in this life, a real man of God.' I said that this happiness was reserved for religious; for if a man seek a rare exotic, or a most beautiful and tender lily, he will not turn his steps into the common fields, nor will he search along the highways, but rather he will enter some enclosed garden, and there, in the most favoured spot, that which is sheltered from the rude blast, that which is most frequently watered and tended by the gardener's skilful hand, will he find the object of his search. So when we seek for high and holy souls, we must go to the cloister, 'the Garden of God,' and there, in the hot-bed of prayer and mortification, forced on by the strong rays of divine love to every form of supernatural beauty, 'flowering like the lily, and yielding a sweet smell and putting forth leaves unto grace,' we shall find those rare and precious flowers of virgin souls, upon whose native whiteness the skilful hand of the Spouse brings out the rich characters of every virtue 'in faith, virtue; and in virtue, knowledge; and in knowledge, abstinence; and in abstinence, patience; and in patience, godliness; and in godliness, love of brotherhood; and in love of brotherhood, charity;' until at length God reveals his power in them, and all who approach them realise the happiness of meeting, once even in life, a soul really devoted to God.

Such happiness as this has been yours, my Sisters, and it is sweet and good to remember it, even in your sorrow. To you it has been given, not only to have met, but to have lived for years with one[1] who

[1] Mother Mary Frances Teresa Ball, Foundress of Loretto Abbey, Rathfarnham, and of many other Houses of 'The

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was truly devoted to God, and in whom 'He that is mighty did great things;' so that all the world wondered when they beheld religious foundations spring up beneath her feet, and the cross raised up, and the altar built in the desert places, and in distant lands, and the places of sanctification set up by a woman's hand, and they cried out, 'the finger of God is here.' They were amazed at a woman's success, because they knew not the secret of her greatness. All that God demands in His instruments is devotedness; and in heart and soul, in thought, word, and deed, in great things and in the smallest, she was devoted to God, and therefore, God found her a fitting instrument in His hand to do His great and holy work. How different are the thoughts and the ways of God from those of men! Men judge of the act by the exterior—by what appears to the senses; God judges by the interior; and the action is great or little in his eyes, according to the purity of intention, and the generosity of heart with which it is done. From this we see that the least action of the saints, their daily duties, the humble offices of St. Felix, the poor despised Capuchin lay brother, are greater before God than the mightiest deeds of kings and emperors, and the great ones of this world. A man rises up and creates a revolution or conquers half the world. Men are astonished, and they proclaim him a hero, and call him great. He sinks into the grave in a few days, and his soul goes down to hell; and what was his life and his greatness before God? What were his greatest actions in the sight of the Lord? A

Institute of Mary,' who died on the 19th of May, 1861, in the 48th year of her religious profession.

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mere passing chance wrought in the 'figure of this world,' which is itself but as a speck in the vast creation. But the least action of a saint lives for ever. 'Their fruits remain,' and 'good things continue with their seed.' 'Their works follow them to heaven, and obtain for them there 'the weight of eternal glory.' If then the least thing done for God be so great, what shall we say of a life made up of such greatness as made the world wonder and be astonished, and yet, which in everything, great and small, sought God alone—His greater honour and glory; and such was the life of the Mother for whom you are yet weeping. Truly did she live for God; for Him did she watch from the morning light, and when 'the day was declined, and the shadows of the evening were grown longer,' she still sought Him and served Him with all her soul.

Saintliness is not the destruction, but the perfection of nature. There are certain natural dispositions which fit the soul to receive the highest gifts of grace and holiness. These your Mother possessed in a wonderful degree. There was in her, naturally, a certain grandeur of soul, which sought high things from high motives, and which left her strangely free from the vanity, the self-seeking, the petty revenge, and all the other littlenesses which beset and annoy ordinary mortals. When grace found such a nature, and when Holy Church pointed out to such a soul the highest objects for which man can live, and the highest motives which can influence him, it was natural to expect a great life. She 'exulted like a giant to run the way,' and as she was wholly devoted to the Lord in mind and intention, her work was successful, and glorious things are said of her in the City of God. Let others speak of

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her as the foundress of many religious houses, and as one whom 'the Lord made to dwell in the house the joyful mother of many children,' but I will praise her, for that her eye ever looked to God steadily, as the eye of the Mother of Sorrows was fixed upon her dying Son on Calvary; so that she could truly say with St. Catharine of Siena: 'Never, never have I sought my own glory, but only the honour and glory of God.'

And now, we may ask, was her daily life in religion equal in perfection to such high and holy aims—was there any proportion between her actions and her intentions? To answer this important question, let us consider what is the great perfection of the life of a religious. Spiritual writers tell us, that it is 'the gift of discipline,' or, in other words, a faithful and persevering observance of all the rules and obligations of religion. Observance of rule is the great way by which Almighty God leads religious to perfection: hence in order to become a saint, a religious has only to perform all his actions in a true and perfect spirit of discipline, and to observe all his rules most faithfully. This being the case, in order to answer the great question which I asked above, we have only to ascertain how did she observe her rules. The religious day begins with early prayer, 'Let my prayer be directed as incense in thy sight,' prays the Psalmist—and as it was written (Exod. xxx.) 'And thou shalt set the altar over against the veil—and Aaron shall burn sweet smelling incense upon it *in the morning*.' So in the early morning, the spouses of Christ come together, that from the altars of their hearts the incense of prayer may go up to God. And whose was 'the golden censer,' which was always in its place in the sanctuary, 'over against the veil,'

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so faithfully sending up its fragrance to heaven, that it seemed to be 'an everlasting incense before the Lord throughout your generations?' Day followed day for forty-seven years, and faithful as the sun to its rising was your Mother to say to God, 'O God, my God, to Thee do I watch from the morning light.' Mindful in her wisdom of the word which was said to them of old, '*in the morning* the Lord will give you bread to the full,' each dawn found her in prayer—hungering and thirsting after divine things, and in her contemplation 'drawing water with joy from the fountains of the Saviour,' and her soul feasted daily on 'the bread which the Lord had given her to eat.' And as the well-appointed day passed on, each hour bringing with it its own duty, she was still the first and the most faithful in every observance. 'All things have their season,' says the preacher, 'and in their times all things pass under heaven—a time to keep silence and a time to speak.' When it was 'a time to speak,' then was she in the midst of her children in recreation; and when it was a time to keep silence,' then did she speak only with God. She was 'a burning and a shining light' of religious discipline, enlightening and assisting you by her example, never was she even suspected of the slightest breach of rule, but most justly regarded by you all as the very embodiment of observance.

She asked you, my Sisters, to do many things for God and for your own sanctification; she never asked you to observe or to do anything which she herself had not first observed and done most faithfully. As my knowledge of her increased by intercourse, I perceived she was one of an order of minds, of whom I have met a few in religion, who seem

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utterly incapable of deliberately and knowingly violating any, even the least, law. There are some such, thank God, in the world. I have never met such a one without feeling the happiness of being near a man of God, and that happiness I have tasted in having known the venerable Mother and friend, whose memory shall never fade from my mind.

But no matter how high the gifts of discipline and prayer, how great the works of active life, they must be made perfect in patience, 'for patience hath a perfect work.' The tree, in order that it live at all, must be planted in the vineyard of religion by the hand of God, for 'every plant which my Heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up,' says our Lord. But even when so planted, and watered by Divine grace, 'so that it flower like the lily and put forth leaves unto grace,' its fruit must come in patience, 'and they shall bear fruit in patience' so that the Saviour says: 'In your patience you shall possess your souls;' and here also we behold the dealings of God with our holy and venerable Mother. For half a century she had served God, 'going from virtue to virtue,' and adding grace to grace; gentle in reproof, powerful in encouragement, tender in compassion, bright in example. Hers was the downcast eye, which was seldom raised, but sought the earth for her exceeding modesty; hers was the steady, firm carriage, which bespoke the stable mind; hers the sweet low voice, long accustomed to converse with God in holy prayer; her whole being showed the virgin as the Apostle would have her, 'holy both in body and in spirit.' And this interior life was fruitful also in action. All around her was her own creation, for, says the Scripture,

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'a wise woman buildeth her house,' and other it was given to build many houses, 'not for man, but for God.' She sent forth her children over the whole world, to water the tender plants of young souls, and 'to prepare unto the Lord a perfect people.' This was her life, and 'because she was acceptable to God, it was necessary that temptation should prove her,' and now the end came. 'In the sight of the unwise her departure was taken for misery, and her going away from us for utter destruction,' because God tried her, and found her worthy of Himself; as gold in the furnace He proved her, and as a victim of the holocaust He received her.' (Wisd. iii). She was not destined to die by a quick or easy death. Such a life, and such virtue as hers, required something beyond an ordinary end. When the Lord comes to his temple, according to the prophet (Mal. iii.), He refines the silver and the gold, 'and He shall sit refining and cleansing the silver: and He shall purify the sons of Levi, and shall refine them as gold and as silver,' and for seven long months of suffering and sorrow did He sit by the bedside of her who had served and loved Him so well, refining the silver and the gold of her virtue, and crowning her life with the perfection of patience. I say the perfection of patience, for call to mind, my Sisters, how she suffered. You all remember her last day of health; how happy she was on that feast of her patron, St. Teresa; how sweetly and joyously she smiled on us all, and how happy all her children were around her. Next day finds her prostrate on a bed of pain, and days became weeks, and still she was in pain, and weeks, months, and month fol-

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lowed month, and still she suffered—disease succeeded disease—and sorrow added to sorrow. All the saints looked down upon her with pitying eyes at their great festival. Christmas came, but its festivities were forgotten at Loretto, and the tears that flowed here on that blessed night were not unmingled with sorrow. Oh, how dreary was the long winter's night to the sleepless sufferer, vainly seeking a moment's ease from pain! Lent passed away, and Good Friday was spent with Jesus on the Cross. The sun of Easter shone out, the Lord was risen, yet she arose not from the hard bed of sorrow, but, like Magdalene, was still weeping. Nature revived, and all things lived again in the health of spring; she lived on, but it was still the winter of her pain. At length came the sweet month of Mary; she began it in sorrow; but, oh, she ended it in joy! Seven months in the furnace of pain and suffering had prepared her for the joys of her Lord, and now 'the marriage of the Lamb was come, and His bride had prepared herself,' and her own loved Mother Mary came to her and sweetly took her away to heaven, for before earth was saddened by the end of the May devotions, her soul was made joyful in the embraces of the Lord her God. "Virtus in infirmitate perficitur' (Galatians), says the Apostle, 'Virtue is made perfect in infirmity.' May we not apply these holy words to our dear mother, when we remember how she suffered. Many of us saw her every day during these seven months. Was she ever impatient even in the least degree? Did ever word, or look, or gesture betray the least impatience? Never! Thanks be to God for the gift of still higher and more heroic patience, she rejoiced in pain and suffering with great joy; we could only

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know when pain became agony by the sweet smile which lighted up her face. I was obliged to put her under obedience to communicate her sufferings, and never, during the seven months, did she commit a venial sin of impatience, even in thought!

Oh, was it not happiness to have known her! When shall we look upon her like again? A life, fruitful in the Church, even to greatness, and consecrated by the purest intention; an observance, faultless, even as an example or precedent, and crowned by angelic patience! Truly it was a happiness to have known her; a privilege and a glory to have lived and walked with her in the house of God. You know well that in all I have said I have spoken no exaggeration. What a joy, then, even for a time, to have lived with such a Mother—to have lived in the light of her great example. What a joy in sorrow even now, to live whilst her remembrance, and the sweet odour of her goodness, are yet fresh within those walls.

We are accustomed to look back with a kind of envy to the first days of our Order, and to those whose fervour was sustained, and whose failing steps were strengthened by the presence of their holy founder; she was a second foundress of the Institute of Mary, and you have lived in the brightness of her example, like the first companions of St. Dominick, St. Francis, and St. Ignatius, in centuries gone by.

And now she is gone forth 'out of the place of her sojournment,' like the Hebrew mother, who 'rose up to go to her own country,' and you her daughters wept at the parting, as Orpha and Ruth wept over Noemi, 'and they lifted up their voices and began to weep,' and to say, 'We will go on

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with thee to thy people.' 'But,' she answered, 'return my daughters, why come with me?' And the Scripture tells us that 'they lifted up their voices and began to weep again,' and then it adds, sadly, 'that Orpha kissed her mother-in-law and returned.' Oh, sad return! She forgot Noemi, and walked in her steps no longer, but returned to her own people, and to the Moabitish gods. A parting tear, a brief embrace, sad, because of human sorrow, and she turned away from her mother and forgot her. 'But Ruth stuck close to her mother-in-law,' and said: 'Be not against me to desire that I should leave, thee and depart, for whithersoever thou shalt go I will go, and where thou shalt dwell I will dwell; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God. The land that shall receive thee dying in the same will I die.' And so Ruth followed her mother, and walked in her steps, and served the God of Israel; and the land that received her mother dying received her also; for at the last day Noemi and Ruth shall be among the crowned saints of God; but Orpha, unhappy Orpha, where shall thy place be? At the other side of the impenetrable abyss, amongst those whose 'hope and joy have perished from the Lord' for ever.

Oh, my dear Sisters, how will it be with you and your mother on that dread day? She is gone 'to the land of her own people.' Will you, like Ruth, accompany Noemi, which meaneth beautiful; will you follow in her footsteps of purity of intention, of faithful observance, of zeal and of sweet patience, that so the same land which received her dying may receive you also; or will you, like Orpha, return another way, and forget her, nor walk any more in her paths? I will not add to your sorrow by

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pressing such a question. You loved her, love her still. She deserved your love; oh, how much more does she not deserve it now? Be ye imitators of her, as she also was of Christ. The day will come when you shall surround her in heaven, as you surrounded her on earth, and with her you shall 'follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth.' Oh! may that day of bliss and that glory be yours in the kingdom. Amen.

THE END.

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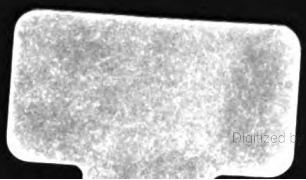
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